

THE CHURCH BELL TRADITION IN NEWFOUNDLAND:
A REFLECTION OF CULTURE CHANGE

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THE CHURCH BELL TRADITION IN NEWFOUNDLAND:

A REFLECTION OF CULTURE CHANGE

by



Sheila MacKenzie Brown

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Department of Folklore
Memorial University of Newfoundland

August 1981

St. John's

Newfoundland

ABSTRACT

Based on the premise that customs are adopted to meet recurring needs, that the needs of one culture are not the same as those of another, and that needs change within a developing culture, this study looks at the way in which the customs associated with the church bell tradition are reflective of the societal changes which have occurred in Newfoundland.

The data for this work was obtained primarily from personal interviews and field research conducted between January 1980 and July 1981 on the South Coast of Newfoundland, the Northern Peninsula, the Port-au-Port Peninsula, and the Bonavista Peninsula, in Central Newfoundland, and the City of St. John's and its environs. Further information was obtained from questionnaires distributed to the clergy of the province, and from library and archive research, particularly the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive collection.

The purchase of church bells in Newfoundland, spanning a period of some 140 years, was tied to the prosperity of the fishing industry. With the influx of electronic systems in the mid-twentieth century, the purchase of church bells per se died out.

With a long history of development in Great Britain the tradition was altered substantially when transferred

to Newfoundland. Change ringing, requiring several bells, was not continued because the bells were too expensive, and the wooden church towers were not strong enough to support the weight of more than one bell. Many ringing customs associated with large-scale agriculture were inappropriate in the fishing-oriented society of this province, and others, such as the use of the bell as a directional guide, were given a new emphasis--in this case, guiding men across water rather than land.

Church bell inscriptions, one of the more stable aspects of the tradition, are expressive of ideals and values in Britain and Newfoundland alike. The structures built to house the bells, however, have changed in recent times under the influence of North American culture. This same influence, as well as the general development of Newfoundland, has led to a decline in the use of church bells as audible communicators, and to the introduction of a secondary display function.

The customs and changes associated with this tradition can be seen not only as a reflection of the needs of Newfoundland society, but also of the early influences of Great Britain, the break of colonial ties with the "Mother Country", the later influences of North American culture, and the subsequent political and economic attachment to Canada.

DEDICATION


To my mother and father
from
their favourite little clapper,
"because."



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is impossible to write a study of this nature in total isolation, and it is only, perhaps, when one sits down to write the acknowledgements that one actually realises just how many people were involved in the overall effort of research and writing. It would also be impossible to name here all the people who helped, either by providing information, encouragement or a shoulder to cry on; but I am most grateful to one and all and can only hope that the thesis which follows does justice to them.

There are, however, several groups and individuals whom I must name here since without them this thesis would never have come to be. I thank, first of all, my parents who, despite the fact that I deserted them nine years ago, to come to Newfoundland, have been a constant source of support and understanding. They have always patiently, though not unquestioningly, accepted me and my various endeavours, and have always been there when I needed them most. To them go my eternal thanks, and I dedicate this thesis to them as a tangible expression of my gratitude, and simply, as my mother would say, "because."



The perennial problem of students, that of finances, was alleviated for me by many people, and I thank my parents for helping me out earlier this year; Dr. Frederick A. Aldrich, Dean of Graduate Studies, for support in the form

of a bursary; the Department of Folklore for providing me with an archive assistantship and funds for fieldwork research; and Paton College for providing me with an apartment and a proctorship. I thank, too, the girls of Curtis House who were a constant reminder to me that life does not revolve around bells and folklore, and who were, as a result, instrumental in the maintenance of my sanity over the past two years.

Although this study is concerned with bells, it was not, and could not have been written in isolation from the other areas of folklore scholarship, and my sincere thanks go out to my teachers in the Department of Folklore under the leadership of Dr. David Buchan whom I found to be a stabilising emotional, and intellectual prop. Special thanks go to Dr. Gerald L. Pocius who, as my advisor throughout the preparation of this thesis, has been a constant and valued source of advice and assistance, and who was one of the few people who did not 'crack up laughing' when I announced my intention to look at the church bell tradition.

My colleagues in the Department of Folklore have also been tremendously supportive over the last two years, by listening to my ramblings and thoughts, by providing references, suggestions and ideas in academic life, and by providing companionship and solace on the social side. Special thanks go to Jane Burns, Natalie MacPherson, and Annie Drover (née Pierfer) without whom life would not have

been nearly so significant, nor such fun; to Cheryl Brauner and Elene Freer for their assistance on field trips and their permission to use selected photographs in this thesis; to Catherine Schwoeffermann and Colin Quigley for sharing worries and ideas whilst we were actually writing; to Cheryl Brauner and Jamie Moreira for giving up vast amounts of time to proof read the final draft, for the tactful manner in which they suggested improvements, and for bringing me back to normality every time I went 'off the deep end'; to Ali Kahn for the hand-drawn figures which she managed to produce from my dubious doodlings; and to Mrs. Dallas Strange who patiently worked on the typing of this thesis and uncomplainingly contended with last minute renovations. I know that Mrs. Strange has been dreaming about funerals and tolling bells as a result of this work, so I offer her my apologies as well as my thanks. Thanks are also extended to Ben Hansen and his team in the department of Educational Television for reproducing my photographs.

Friends outside the Folklore department have also been very supportive and encouraging over the last two years, and their ears have been most receptive to my tales of woe, joy and wonderment. Special thanks go to Joanne Macaskill who, by now, must know as much about bells and folklore as I do. She has 'heard' me through all my problems and predicaments as a student and a proctor, has provided me with much needed emotional and spiritual support,

has given permission for the use of several photographs in this study and, with Isabelle Hall, has patiently accompanied me in my explorations of bell towers on Fogo Island and the Northern Peninsula. I would like to thank Joanne's father, Rev. Peter Macaskill of Chomedey, Quebec, for the photographs of the installation of the bell in the United Church in St. Anthony, and Mr. Esau Parsons of Freshwater, Bell Island, for the photographs of the demolition of the tower on St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church in Lance Cove.

Last, but by no means least, I wish to thank the people of Newfoundland who have provided the material for this thesis. I am most grateful to the clergy of the province, and others, who painstakingly responded to my questionnaires; to the hundreds of people who talked to me about bells and other aspects of folklore which I researched during my coursework; and to the many people who took me into their homes and fed, (watered, accommodated, educated and entertained me while I was doing field research. Field work can be quite traumatic, and, whilst mine was terrifying on occasions because of the nature of bell towers, the personal contact side of it was a wonderful and memorable experience. To the people who made it so I say a heartfelt "Thank You."

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INTRODUCTION

In January 1980, as part of a course in Folk Religion, I began looking at the Church Bell Tradition in St. John's, Newfoundland. Having grown up in England where this tradition is quite strong, and having spent five years, from 1974-1979, sharing an office with an Englishman who was, himself, a bell and change ringing enthusiast for thirty years, it was a topic of some interest to me. I had lived in Gander, Newfoundland for six years prior to my move to St. John's in September 1979, and had missed, on several of the more emotional Church Holy Days, the clamour of the church bells to which I had grown accustomed in my youth. I should point out here that the churches in Gander are equipped with electronic chime systems, and there are no church bells as such in that town. On my arrival in St. John's this sound was again missing since I lived in an area remote from church buildings, and the church I attended again made use of an electronic system.

It occurred to me that since so many Newfoundlanders were of British descent, there should be some sort of carry-over of the British bell tradition in the province, not necessarily that of change ringing--which requires anything from five to twelve bells, and which would not have been a feasible undertaking for most communities in Newfoundland due to the general expense, and because the wooden buildings were not strong enough to support so many swinging bells--but surely that of using the bells as a communication

system--calling people to worship, announcing a death, or rejoicing at a wedding.

With this in mind I began my research in the city of St. John's, contacting the various churches and talking to ministers, priests, caretakers, church wardens, and anyone else who would spare me some time. The results of this research I found somewhat surprising, interesting and evocative. Of the thirty-five churches I contacted in the city, I found only nine to have church bells, and only seven of these to have bells in a ringable condition. Thirteen of the churches used electronic systems, twelve had no system of call to worship, and one had a hand-bell choir which was used as a part of the worship service, but not as a call to worship.

The city bells seem to have only one major function, that of calling the parishioners to worship and prayer, and even that seems to be continued today more out of habit and for the sake of tradition than out of necessity. Many of my informants made reference to the bells having been rung for weddings and tolled for funerals in earlier times; this practice being continued today only for State dignitaries. One interesting revival was mentioned; that of ringing the bells for the departure of the Sealing Fleet in the Spring.

The reasons for the lack of bells in the city churches are varied, as will be seen from the comments below:

4
We hold services in an old school building, so bells were never installed.

Mary Queen of Peace
Msgr. Lawlor.¹

The structure of the building is not suitable to hold bells, and since it is not a community church, it would not serve the purpose of calling the people to church anyway.

West End Baptist Church
Rev. Arbo.²

We have never had a bell, but then we don't have a tower either. This is what you might call a 'Bayman's Church', it was built and maintained by poor people. This is a poor parish and we couldn't afford a bell.

Wesley United Church
Rev. Mills.³

We have no bells at all. The service starts at 11 o'clock, everyone knows that, and I just start preaching.

First Baptist Church
Pastor Davis.⁴

We have no money to buy a bell. There is really no need in this day and age anyway, the congregation is so wide-spread that the bell wouldn't actually serve a very good purpose. Most people live too far away to hear it.

It's not like it was when I was growing up. Life on Fogo was regulated by the church bell.

St. Augustine's
Rev. Ludlow.⁵

¹Telephone interview with Monsignor E.R. Lawlor, Mary Queen of Peace Parish, Torbay Rd., St. John's, 15 January 1980.

²Telephone interview with Rev. Harold Arbo, West End Baptist Church, Topsail Rd., St. John's, 11 January 1980.

³Telephone interview with Rev. R.H. Mills, Wesley United Church, Patrick St., St. John's, 11 January 1980.

⁴Telephone interview with Pastor Murray B. Davis, First Baptist Church, Portugal Cove Rd., St. John's, 11 January 1980.

⁵Telephone interview with Rev. Ludlow, St. Augustine's Parish, Westerland Rd., St. John's, 17 January 1980.

A trip to Fogo Island in March 1980 brought home the validity of this last remark. Whilst in the community of Fogo, I asked the caretaker of the Anglican Church if he would ring the bell so that I could make a tape-recording of the sound. He explained that he could not oblige since the church bell was also used as the fire bell, and if rung outside of the usual Sunday ringing times would bring the whole community out to fight a fire. The difference in life style between the more remote community of Fogo on Fogo Island and the cosmopolitan city of St. John's is such that it set me to wondering about the church bell tradition in other parts of the province, and to thinking about making this subject the topic of my thesis.

And so the seed was sown. My own interest in the subject found me wondering how much of the British tradition had been transferred to Newfoundland, and with the research already carried out, wondering about the differences between the tradition in urban and rural areas within the province. I had already concluded that the tradition was indeed folklore in that it encompassed material culture with the bell itself, and the structure in which it is housed; folk religion with the use of bells within and outside of the bounds of organized religion; and custom and belief, with their traditional times and reasons for ringing.

Ward Goodenough defines custom as "the routines by which people habitually deal with recurring situations,"⁶

⁶Ward Goodenough, Cooperation in Change (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1963), p. 266.

and it is my contention that since conditions vary between cultures, and through time within a culture, these "recurring situations" will differ accordingly, and there will be a resultant alteration of the custom. A custom, then, will change as its host culture changes and develops. The purpose of this thesis is to show how the customs associated with the church bell tradition changed alongside of societal development in the British context, were adapted to fit the needs of a new context on their adoption in Newfoundland, and, finally, how they continue to change in the modern context of a developing Newfoundland. Thus, my aim is to show how the church bell tradition, like other customs, reflects culture change not only when adopted into a new society, but also within a developing society.

In order to demonstrate this I will look at the historic and geographic spread of bells in Newfoundland; and the relationship between their introduction and dissemination and the socioeconomic situation. This overview will give some insight into the origins of the tradition, and some of the cultural influences, both internal and external, which shaped its development. Then, by looking at the two major communicative devices inherent to the tradition--church bell inscriptions and ringing customs--from the point of view of their development in Britain and then in Newfoundland, I will show how these devices have been influenced by culture change on both sides of the Atlantic. At the same time, this survey will give an indication of the form of these modes of communication in Britain at the

time of their adoption into Newfoundland. By looking at the development of the tradition on both sides of "the pond", as we affectionately refer to the Atlantic, a much clearer idea will be gained of the amount and type of dissemination which took place. We will be able to see which aspects of the tradition were continued in the west, which were changed, and the nature of these changes, and which were rejected by the new society. By relating the functions of these devices to their cultural context we will also be able to see why some remained stable whilst others were modified or abandoned.

More recently, in some areas of Newfoundland, bells have been replaced by "modern" electronic communication systems, imported from North America's more technologically advanced society. Having become redundant in their original role, these bells were given a secondary function which whilst maintaining the form of the artifacts, altered their meaning and use. Social reorganization within the province was also partially responsible for the introduction of this secondary function, as was the general wear and tear on bells through years of use, or moments of misuse. By looking at the nature of, and need for this altered function I will attempt to demonstrate how it is indicative of feelings of cultural heritage on the part of Newfoundlanders, cultural change within the province, and acculturative influences from North America. I will also look at how the latter influences have led to a change in style in the

structures built to house the bells.

By dividing my discussion in this manner I hope to demonstrate how the customs associated with the church bell tradition are indicative of culture change and acculturative influences; how the tradition, in adapting to the Newfoundland context, was influenced initially by the British culture, through colonial attachments, and latterly by the North American culture to which it has, by choice, become affiliated. My discussion and conclusions will be based on research conducted over the past eighteen months, an outline of which will be found in the following chapter.

CHAPTER I

DO BATS REALLY HANG OUT IN BELFRIES?

SOME ASPECTS OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It should be noted that Hanging Chambers some-¹ times have an affinity to elephant traps. . . .

Three different research methods were employed in collecting the data for this thesis. Questionnaires (see Appendix A) were sent to the clergy of the province, the names of whom were obtained from the Anglican, Roman Catholic and United Church offices in St. John's. A total of 359 questionnaires were distributed throughout the island and some areas of Labrador. Table 1 outlines the form and number of responses to this questionnaire.

TABLE 1
BREAKDOWN OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

	Distrib- uted	Returned	Letters	Phone	Total
Anglican	139	17	13	1	31
Roman Catholic	102	11	5	0	16
United Church	118	20	9	0	29

Approximately 100 additional questionnaires were distributed amongst friends and university students with a return of 6, giving a total of 54 completed questionnaires.

¹Patricia Dirsztay, Church Furnishings: A NADFAS Guide (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), p. 129.

27 letters, and one telephone call--82 replies in all.

Although returns only numbered about 18 per cent, those received contained some very valuable information and many people obviously went to considerable time and trouble to provide the details for me. All completed questionnaires are now housed in the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive (MUNFLA) under the accession number Q80A.

My second approach was via library and archive research. Manuscripts in the MUNFLA collection dealing with Calendar Customs, Rites of Passage, Life Histories, and Community Ethnographies were checked for references to bells and ringing customs. Church Histories, published locally by parishes, were looked at for references to the bell, its installation, or the name of the donor or donating group, and research was also conducted on the provincial publications of the three major religious denominations--The Monitor, published by the Roman Catholic Church, The Newfoundland Churchman, published by the Anglican Church, and The Clerical Caller, published by the United Church.

My third approach took the form of personal field research, this being carried out in two ways: one, trips to specific regions with the sole purpose of locating bells and interviewing people in the area; and two, by noting, and, if possible, looking at bells whilst travelling with other people for other reasons. The following information was recorded for each bell:

- (1) The ~~name of the~~ company making the bell;
- (2) The year in which it was made;
- (3) The inscription;
- (4) The date of installation in the church;
- (5) The type of structure housing the bell;
- (6) How the bells were put into these structures;
- (7) When the bell is rung, why, and by whom;
- (8) Where a bell had been replaced by an electronic system, when and why this change had been made;
- (9) People's feelings towards bells;
- (10) Whether any stories existed about the bell ringing at unusual times, or by itself.

My approach to field research was twofold in that I gleaned as much information as possible from the bell itself, and also from local people as to its history, installation, ringing times and the like. By trial and error I discovered that, for my needs, the best method of recording a bell was by photographing it, close up for the inscription, and at a longer range to show the mountings and setting; recording, in a note-book, the inscription and diameter and any other pertinent information about the tower and its contents; and, when possible, recording the sound of the bell with a tape recorder, each recording being preceded with the sound of Concert A from a tuning fork so that the pitch could be determined. The sound recordings were not made in the bell chambers themselves since the reverberation of the sound, with its numerous overtones,

was too much for the recorder to cope with at such close quarters. To be honest, it was also too much for the researcher to cope with at such close quarters, and having been subjected to this on two occasions, I became very much aware of the plausability of Dorothy Sayer's suggestion, in her book The Nine Tailors, that the death of a person tied up in a bell chamber had been caused by burst ear drums and insanity brought on by the sound of the bells' ringing.

The location tended to dictate just what equipment was employed when annotating the bell. This ranged from the full complement of two cameras, one for black and white prints, the other for coloured slides, an electronic flash, a measuring tape, note-book and pen, and flash-light, down to the note-book and pen and flash-light, the former being stuffed into the waist of my jeans, the latter between my teeth, thus leaving the hands free to negotiate the climb.

It might be advantageous at this point to outline the places in which bells may be located so that the reader is aware of some of the problems involved in actually getting to them.

Bells in Towers Attached to the Church

Access to bells in church towers is usually gained via a series of ladders which ascend to the "bell" or "hanging chamber" from the inside of the structure. Depending on the size of the tower, this chamber is usually on either the second or third level, the "ringing chamber" being on the level below (see Figure 1). In the

two-level type tower, where ringing is done from ground level, access to the bell can often only be gained through a trap door in the ceiling of the lowest level of the tower. Sometimes too, this method of initial entry applies to taller towers where ringing is done from ground level rather than from a ringing chamber. In some churches vertical ladders, nailed to the wall, lead to this trap door; in others, mode of entry is left to one's ingenuity.

Generally speaking, in churches with taller towers, access to the second level is usually by a staircase which, because it is open to the public view, matches the interior finish and furnishing of the church. Ladders used for access to smaller towers come in many varieties. In the Anglican Church in McCallum is found what I will call the "fireman's-loft" type ladder (Figure 2) which pulls down from the ceiling and is equipped with wide steps and a hand rail for ease of access. This, alas, was the only one of its type that I encountered. In St. Lawrence Anglican Church in Belleoram is found the home-made ladder of the rung variety, but equipped with hand rails (Figure 3), again for ease of access, and leading to a roomy bell chamber with a bell (Figure 4) mounted at floor level such that even people under five feet tall, like myself, can view, photograph, and measure it with ease. Again, this type of ladder is rare. The most commonly found ladder is the home-made rung type without hand rails, leading to either a floor-mounted bell, or, as in the case of the Anglican Cathedral in St. John's

to one swinging from the ceiling (Figure 5). In some cases, as mentioned earlier, there is no built-in ladder and on more than one occasion I found myself attempting "Spider Man" feats on the internal crossbeams of the tower, or, as in the case of St. David's Presbyterian Church in St. John's, climbing up the shelves of a cupboard in order to reach the trap door in the ceiling, through which I managed to haul myself after a helpful shove from the minister.

Bells Mounted on Top of the Church

This type of bell location can be most frustrating because inevitably there is no access to it from the inside of the church, and no ladder long enough, even if one were brave enough to climb it, from the outside. Examples of roof-mounted bells can be found at the Anglican Church in Pound Cove (Figure 6) and at Noggin Cove United Church (Figure 7). With the latter, however, I was fortunate in that when I made a second visit to the community, I found a ladder system had been erected (Figure 8) whilst repairs were being made to the roof.

Bells Housed in Campaniles

Bells are often housed in towers or structures separated from the church in what I shall hereafter refer to as "campaniles." These also come in many varieties, and with varying degrees of accessibility. At Pool's Cove United Church is located a ground-level version (Figure 9), access to which poses no problem for the researcher; at

Bunyan's Cove Anglican Church is an example of the raised version of this type of structure (Figure 10), usually requiring the use of a ladder, but which I did not always find available; and an example of the highly raised version, which I usually found inaccessible, can be seen at Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church in Torbay (Figure 11). This latter campanile, however, proved otherwise because of the close proximity of the garage which can be seen on the left of the picture. By climbing first to the roof of the garage and then, with the aid of Mr. White the caretaker, hauling the ladder onto the roof and leaning it against the campanile, I was able to reach the bell.

Campaniles also exist in the enclosed style like that found at the Anglican Church at Lady Cove on Random Island (Figure 12), and the semi-enclosed style as found at Mary Queen of the World Roman Catholic Church in Joe Batt's Arm on Fogo Island (Figure 13). This type of campanile can be misleading as one tends to feel sure that from its inside one will be able to reach the bell. I have found this to be rarely the case, although someone with longer legs than myself might manage to climb the internal cross-beams.

Thus far the bell locations I have mentioned have been primarily connected with working bells, but there is another type which becomes readily apparent after a few field trips. This type comprises those bells which are no longer used as a means of communication, and have either

been discarded and forgotten, as with the bell found underneath the United Church in Weybridge, Random Island (Figure 14), or given a new function, perhaps displayed as a souvenir of the past, as with the bell which was found in a garden in Noggin Cove (Figure 15). Bells of this type can be found in fields, gardens, church and clergymen's basements, in harbours and on beaches--generally speaking, just about anywhere, both on and off church property. More will be said about this type of bell in a later chapter where I will look specifically at this change in role.

Areas of Field Research

As mentioned in the introduction, the reasons for choosing bells for this study came as a direct result of the differences I had noticed between the tradition in the city of St. John's (see Appendix B for bells personally located), and on Fogo Island. As a result of this early research I had formulated several theories:

- (1) the larger the community, the less the efficacy of a bell as a communication system;
- (2) the less industrialised a community, the greater would be the efficacy and use of a bell as a communication system;
- (3) the more remote an area, the greater the need for a bell as a communication system, i.e., where radio, television, and telephones were not in operation, some other system, perhaps a church bell, would be required for rapid communication;

- (4) the remoter the community, the more likely it was to have retained the more traditional customs of bell ringing;
- (5) a smaller, uni-denominational community would be more likely to use a bell as a communication system since it would not be in competition with other church bells.

By the summer of 1980 I was ready to test my hypothesis, and was looking for a remote area of the province in which to do so. The South Coast looked like a good prospect for this type of inquiry since it was mostly accessible only by boat, was not industrialised, and had been settled for a considerable period of time. Thus, I spent from August 12-21 travelling the South Coast, conducting research in thirteen communities, three of which--Rencontre West, Parson's Harbour and Great Jervis--had been resettled and were no longer inhabited. A total of fourteen bells were located (see Appendix C for community and bell location). This was immediately followed by a trip to the Harbour Breton/Hermitage area, that part of the South Coast which is now accessible by car, during which twenty-four bells were located in thirteen communities (see Appendix D).

I decided to make a second trip to Fogo Island for further research since the reason for my initial trip had been in search of a legend and I had really only given the bells a cursory glance after my other work had been completed (see Appendix E for bells personally located). Fogo

Island can be regarded as one of the more remote areas of the province since, although there is a regular ferry service to the mainland, it is not infrequently isolated, during the winter months, for several days at a time. Also, the island was one of the later areas to obtain the services of running water and electricity.

Research was also carried out on the Port-au-Port Peninsula on the West Coast of the province, an area with a high population of French descent, to ascertain whether or not the tradition was affected in any way by the French influence. Results showed that the tradition was much the same as elsewhere on the island, but with a fairly high degree of decline, only one out of the six bells located now being rung (see Appendix F for communities and bell locations).

A trip up the Northern Peninsula to St. Anthony, though not actually for the purposes of research, pointed to the location of eleven bells (see Appendix G), whilst a similar type of trip to Carbonear in Conception Bay brought to light another five (see Appendix H).

Further research was conducted in the area of the Gander to Gambo Loop Road on the East Coast of Newfoundland (see Appendix I for bells located), on Random Island and in the Musgravetown area (see Appendix J for bells located), and because some of the oldest settlements are on the Bonavista Peninsula and, therefore, might have the oldest bells and longest tradition, research was also conducted in that area (see Appendix K for bells located).

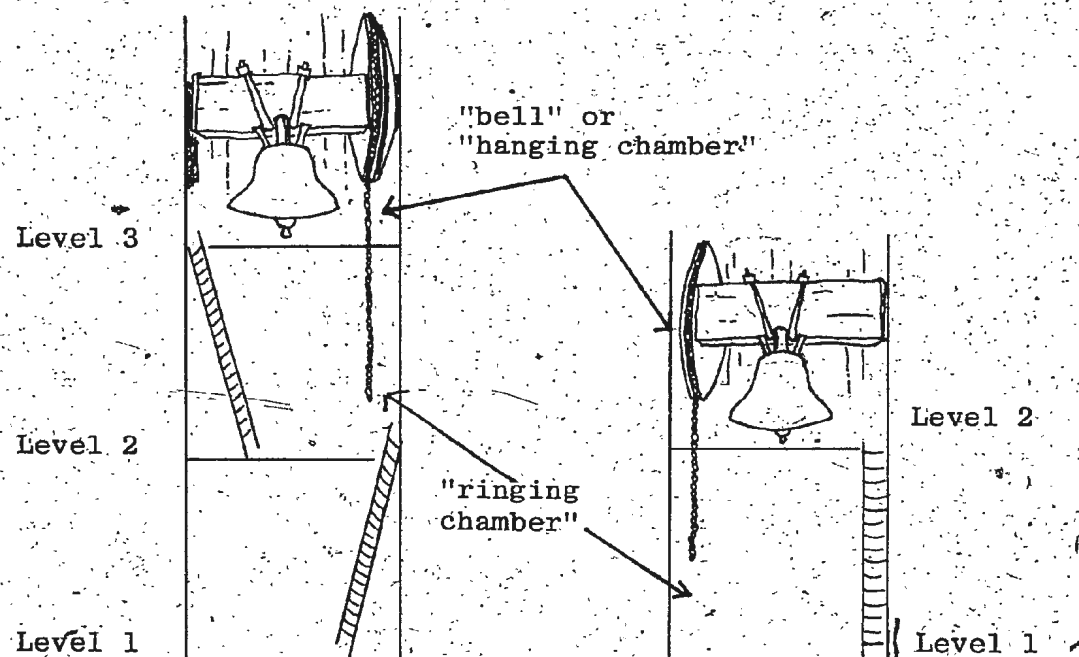


Figure 1. Two and three level church towers showing positions of the "hanging" and "ringing chamber."

Figure 2. "Fireman's-loft" type ladder, Anglican Church, McCallum. (Photograph by Elene Freer)



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Figure 3. Home-made rung ladder with hand rails,
St. Lawrence Anglican Church, Belleoram.



Figure 4. Floor-mounted bell, St. Lawrence Anglican Church, Belleoram.



Figure 5.. "Rung" ladder leading to ceiling hung bell in the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's.



Figure 6. Roof-mounted bell, Pound Cove Anglican Church.



Figure 7. Roof-mounted bell, Noggin Cove United Church.



Figure 8. External ladder system leading to roof-mounted bell, Noggin Cove United Church.
(Photograph by Cheryl Brauner)

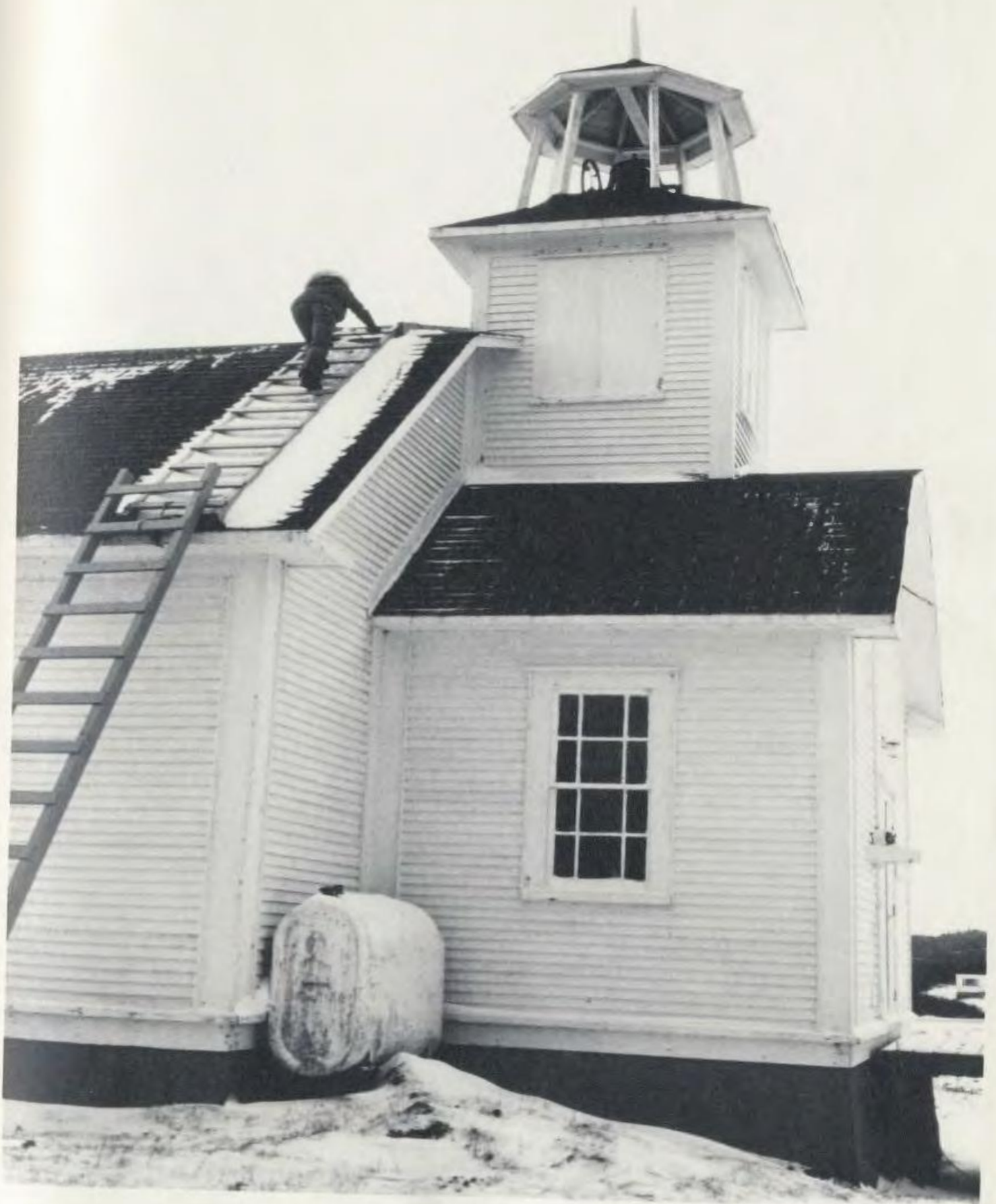


Figure 9. Ground-level campanile, Pool's Cove United Church.

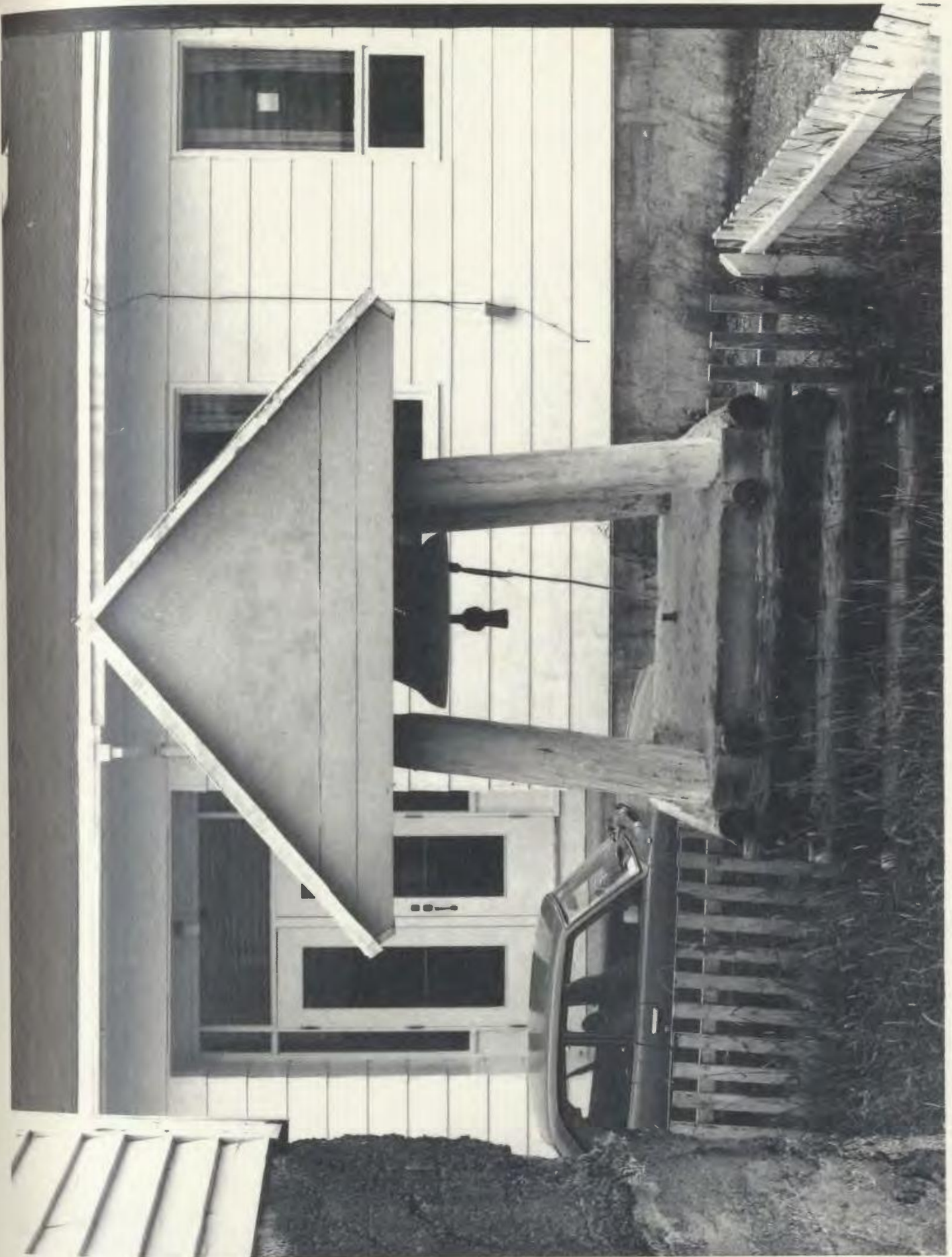


Figure 10. Raised campanile, Bunyan's Cove Anglican Church. (Photograph by Cheryl Brauner)



Figure 11. Highly-raised campanile, Holy Trinity R.C. Church, Torbay; access to which was gained from the roof of the garage on the left of the picture.



Figure 12. Enclosed campanile, Lady Cove Anglican Church,
Random Island.



Figure 13. Semi-enclosed campanile, Mary Queen of the
World R.C. Church, Joe Batt's Arm, Fogo
Island.

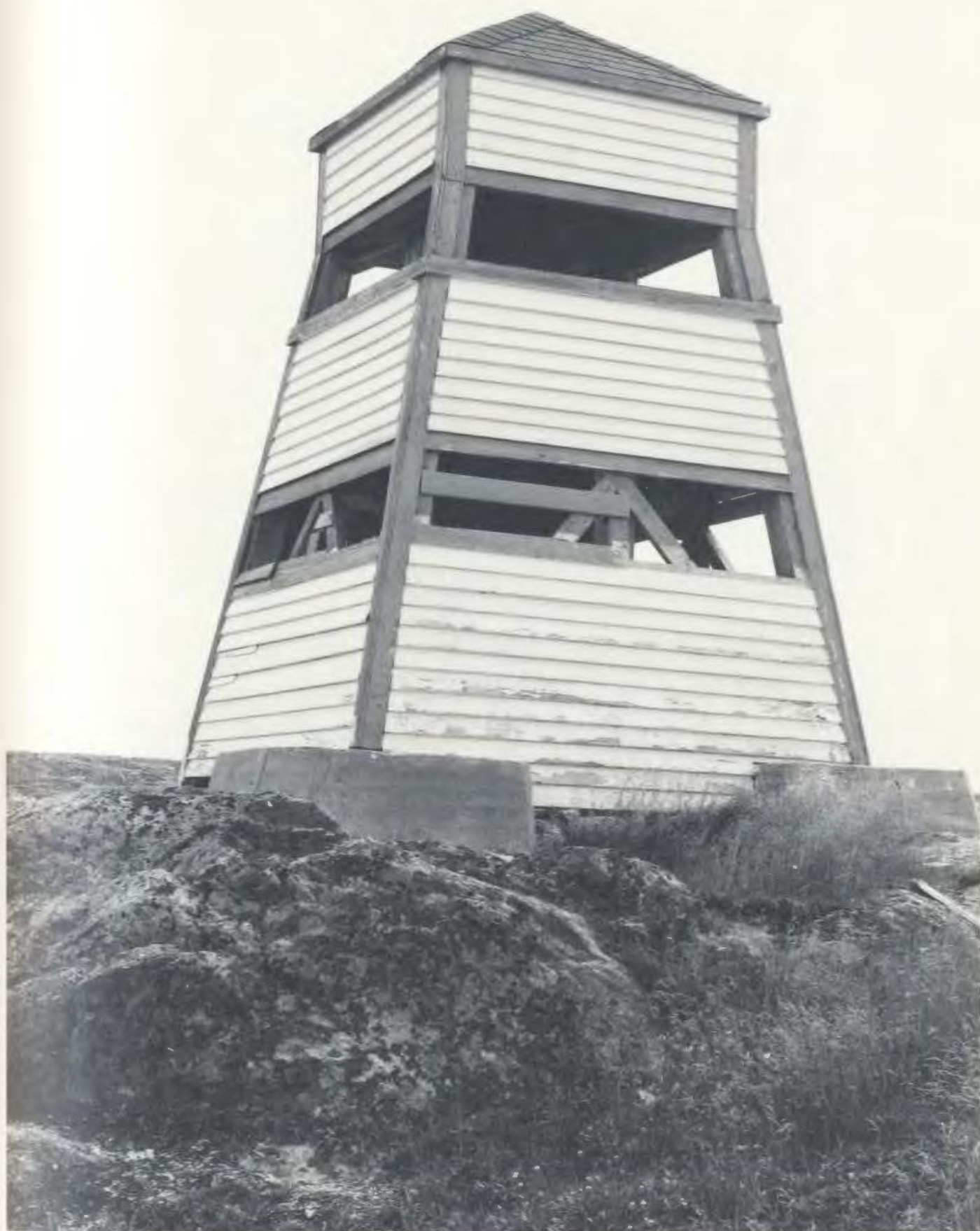


Figure 14. Discarded bell underneath the United Church in Weybridge, Random Island.



Figure 15. Bell displayed as a souvenir of the past in a garden in Noggin Cove.



With a study of this nature, and an island in the province by the name of Bell Island, obviously the two must get together (see Appendix L for bells located on Bell Island and in the environs of St. John's). I had, perhaps somewhat romantically, hoped to find an extraordinarily strong tradition of bells on the Island and stories of its being named after bells which mysteriously rang out life-saving warnings. But I found no such thing. The tradition is neither stronger nor weaker there than in any other area that I visited, and the Island takes its name, not from a real bell, but from a rock just off the coast which, when viewed from the sea, looks like an upturned bell, and its clapper, another rock formation, stands about 200 yards away.

In many areas of this province, ministers and priests serve more than one community, and, as a result, were not always available at the time of my visit. Often too, the Sexton, Church Warden or Caretaker would be working and unable to accompany me to the tower, although whenever possible, I contacted these people for their permission and help. On several occasions I was accompanied on field trips by colleagues from the Folklore Department at the University, Elene Freer assisted me on a trip to Bell Island, and joined me in Burgeo on my South Coast trip, and Cheryl Brauner accompanied me around the Gander to Gambo Loop Road and on my trip to Random Island. I found it to be a distinct advantage to have an assistant who could pass cameras and other equipment up to me once I had climbed into a tower, but I could

persuade neither of them to join me whilst up there. They seemed happier taking photographs whilst I got to the "bottom" of things (Figure 16). Other advantages of having someone with you include their being able to talk you down from a tricky situation. On my first trip to Fogo Island I had climbed forwards through a trap door into the bell chamber in the United Church, but, coming down backwards and unable to see where I was going, I found myself hanging in mid-air incapable of finding a foothold. Fortunately, Joanne Macaskill, a friend from Gander, was with me and able to guide me down. On a later trip up the Northern Peninsula with Joanne, we met a six foot tall trainee-minister from the mainland of Canada who obtained the inscription from the bell at Holy Cross Anglican Church in Daniel's Harbour for me by scaling the campanile (Figure 17), an activity I could never have accomplished.

Of the 157 bells personally located there is one which, perhaps, deserves special mention here because of the problems encountered in reaching it, and because the account of the experience puts in a nut shell some of the hazards of this type of research. The bell under discussion is in the Anglican Church in Grey River on the South Coast, which was researched on August 17, 1980. Elene Freer and I met, as planned, in Burgeo, and joined the Hopedale to continue our journey. By my schedule we were supposed to reach Francois that night, but since we never arrived in Grey River until 11:45 p.m., the Captain decided to moor there for the night. This posed a problem. Because of the boat

scheduling, I either had to go and look at the bell there and then or forget that it existed. I could not forget about it and so we decided to go ashore. We explained our predicament to the sailors who obligingly let down the gangplank and illuminated our path with the ship's search lights. This area of Newfoundland has a fjord coastline, and the coastal steamers are equipped with four large spotlights on the bridge to facilitate navigation and loading and unloading at night.

Almost as soon as we set foot on terra-firma we met up with three teenage lads, Victor Rose, and Ron and Pat Lushman, who became immediately interested in our activities. They explained that the church was locked, because of trouble they had had with vandals coming in from other communities, but willingly volunteered to wake Mr. Freeman Young, the lay reader, who had the key. Despite the hour--it was well after midnight by this time--Mr. Young cheerfully came and opened the church, told us what he knew about the history of the bell, when it was rung, and even rang it for us. Needless to say, this caused somewhat of a disturbance, lights went on all over the community, and two or three people came over to the church to see what was 'wrong'. I asked if I could get up to see the bell, to which Mr. Young replied:

Oh no, I think 'twould be impossible tonight, 'cause ther's no way to go up and get her. You've got to have a ladder outside, eh.

There was obvious disappointment in my voice when I said,

"Oh, you're kidding." A later conversation ran:

Sheila: And there's no way up in the dark, hey?

Mr. Young: Well, if you've got nerve enough to get a ladder and go up that steep roof tonight.

Sheila: I'm daft enough to do it if someone can get me a ladder.

Mr. Young: I don't think that's a very fancy thing to do in the night though.

Sheila: Sure the boat will put the spotlight on for us.

Mr. Young: Yeah, but that don't mean to say that you can't slip off over that steep edge. It's pretty sharp this place is.

Sheila: Let me go and investigate the outdoors.

Mr. Young: Very sharp that is.

Elene: He knows, he did it in the daylight.

Sheila: But I'm never going to be back here!²

Having reconsidered this conversation many times since my return to St. John's, I am amazed that I completely ignored Mr. Young's earnest pleas that I not go up on the roof, and equally amazed at my own insistence, if not downright stubbornness. I put it down to a combination of the fact that I had had a frustrating day of research the day before in Burgeo, and the fact that I never would be back in Grey River.

It now goes without saying that two of the lads acquired a ladder, and the three of us ended up sitting astride the roof of the church at one in the morning. The

²Personal interview with Mr. Freeman Young, 17 August 1980.

Hopedale obligingly threw a spotlight onto the church to aid us in our activities, and when I turned to give a grateful wave, I noticed that she had a distinct list to the port side. This seemed to be directly proportionate to the number of people hanging over the rail on that side in an attempt to see what was going on.

Perched on top of the church was a bell housing topped off with a spire. The door to the housing was completely sealed up and we had to call for hammers with which to remove the offending pieces of wood. It is not easy to catch a hammer whilst sitting on the roof of a church, nor was it easy to take photographs once we had exposed the bell. Victor volunteered to climb into the bell housing and since by this time the true realization of my situation had hit me and I was stuck to the spot in fear, I readily agreed. Marked on the frame supporting the bell was the name of the founder: Stoermer, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, but there was no date. I was quite concerned about this lack of date and made several suggestions to Victor as to where he might find one. Finally, in exasperation, I screamed at him, "I gotta have a date." He calmly replied, "Don't get excited, I'll go out with you any time." It was at this point that I almost became "just another memory" in the Folklore Department at Memorial University. I try to forget about getting down from the roof. My fear of heights was showing its true colours by this time, the roof was indeed "very sharp," and the ladder began about three feet below where the roof stopped.

Figure 16. Getting to the bottom of things in Francois. (Photograph by
Elene Freer)



Figure 17. Awkward campanile, Daniel's Harbour, scaled
by a six foot tall friend.



Although this makes an entertaining story, it is not a research technique that I would recommend. It tends to disrupt the local people, is an easy way to get killed, and gives the Folklore Department a very bad name. It is not, as Mr. Young said, "a very fancy thing to do in the night." However, having made that statement, I know for a fact that if I had seen the church in the daylight I would not have gone up on the roof and would still be wondering from whence the bell came.

As a result of field work research such as the above, I soon discovered that it would have been an advantage to have had a good head for heights and a strong stomach, which brings me back to the question asked in the title of this chapter: Do bats really hang out in belfries? Well, I can't answer with a dogmatic no, but I have not seen any in the approximately 100 bell towers that I have climbed. Dead starlings (Figure 18) yes; dead pigeons and the droppings of the living (Figure 19) yes; nests and eggs (Figures 20 and 21) yes; sleeping flies which tend to wake up when warmed by an electric light (Figure 22) yes, but bats I have yet to find. And still there is more for, particularly with the three-level types of tower attached to the church where the bell is usually in the third level, the second is often used for storing items which one is loathe to throw away but has no actual use for at the present time. It had never occurred to me before to even wonder what a church did with a statue which had been broken or become disfigured.

Figure 18. Dead starling in St. Joseph's R.C. Church tower, St. John's.



Figure 19. Dead pigeon and the droppings of the living in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church tower, St. John's.

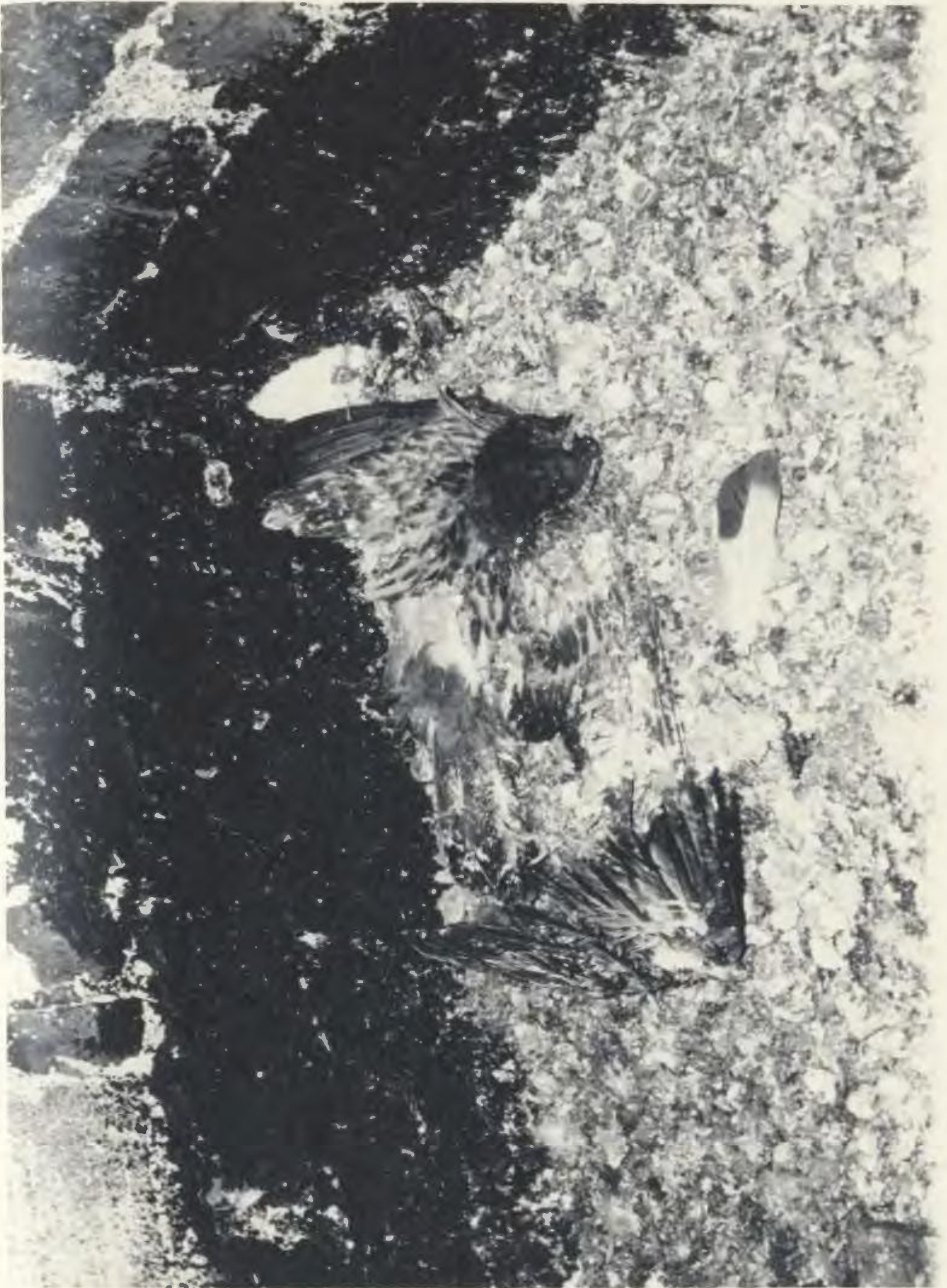


Figure 20. Bird's nest in Joe Batt's Arm Anglican Church tower.



Figure 21. Nest and egg in Corpus Christi R.C.
Church tower, St. John's.

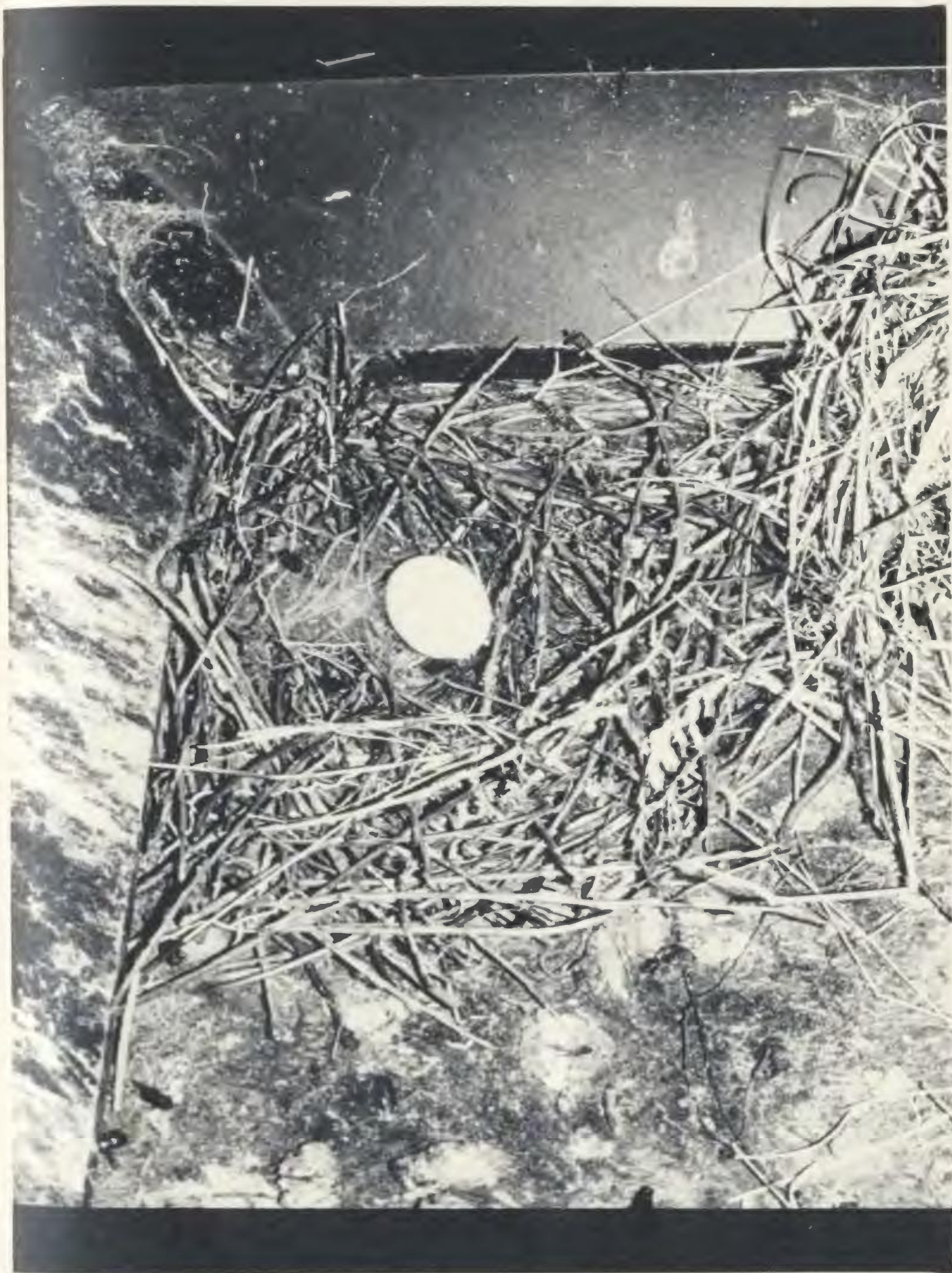


Figure 22. Sleeping flies in St. Boniface Anglican
Church tower, Ramea.



I found several in towers. I also found old stained glass windows, the arches which are erected to welcome visiting Bishops, Christmas cribs, old hymn books, processional crosses, prayer stools, flags, paint cans and nail kegs. Some towers contained fittings from the church's interior removed after renovations, such as light brackets, candelabras, and oil lamps like the four found in the Anglican Church in Mose Ambrose (Figure 23). Others contained larger relics of the past such as the old carillon keyboard (Figure 24) now unused and stored in a tower in the Basilica of St. John the Baptist in St. John's. In fact the towers are, in many cases, veritable storehouses of the history of the church, but I digress from my topic, and by necessity must restrict myself to bells for this report. Nevertheless, it can be seen from the above that church towers can provide great resources for research, not only in construction, but also in content. It should be remembered, however, that they do frequently bear "an affinity to elephant traps" and that, coupled with the oil from the bell mounting, the bird droppings and the general dirt and grime accumulated over the years, can make climbing them a hazardous and extremely messy, if not sordid activity--especially if, as in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in St. John's, the pigeons are a little nervous and react badly to flash photography.

The following chapters of this thesis will be based on the findings of the research outlined above. It has not been my intention to trace every church bell in

Newfoundland, that would take at least a decade, but to gain an idea of the spread of bells around the province and the ringing customs associated with them; a general overview of the life cycle of the Newfoundland church bell as it were. Thus, any conclusions drawn later in the text will, necessarily, be based on my own field research in the areas outlined above and in Appendices B - L, on questionnaire returns and information found in unpublished student manuscripts which can be consulted in the MUNFLA collection, and on information found in church histories and denominational publications from this province.

Figure 23. Oil lamps in the tower of St. Paul's Anglican Church, Mose Ambrose.

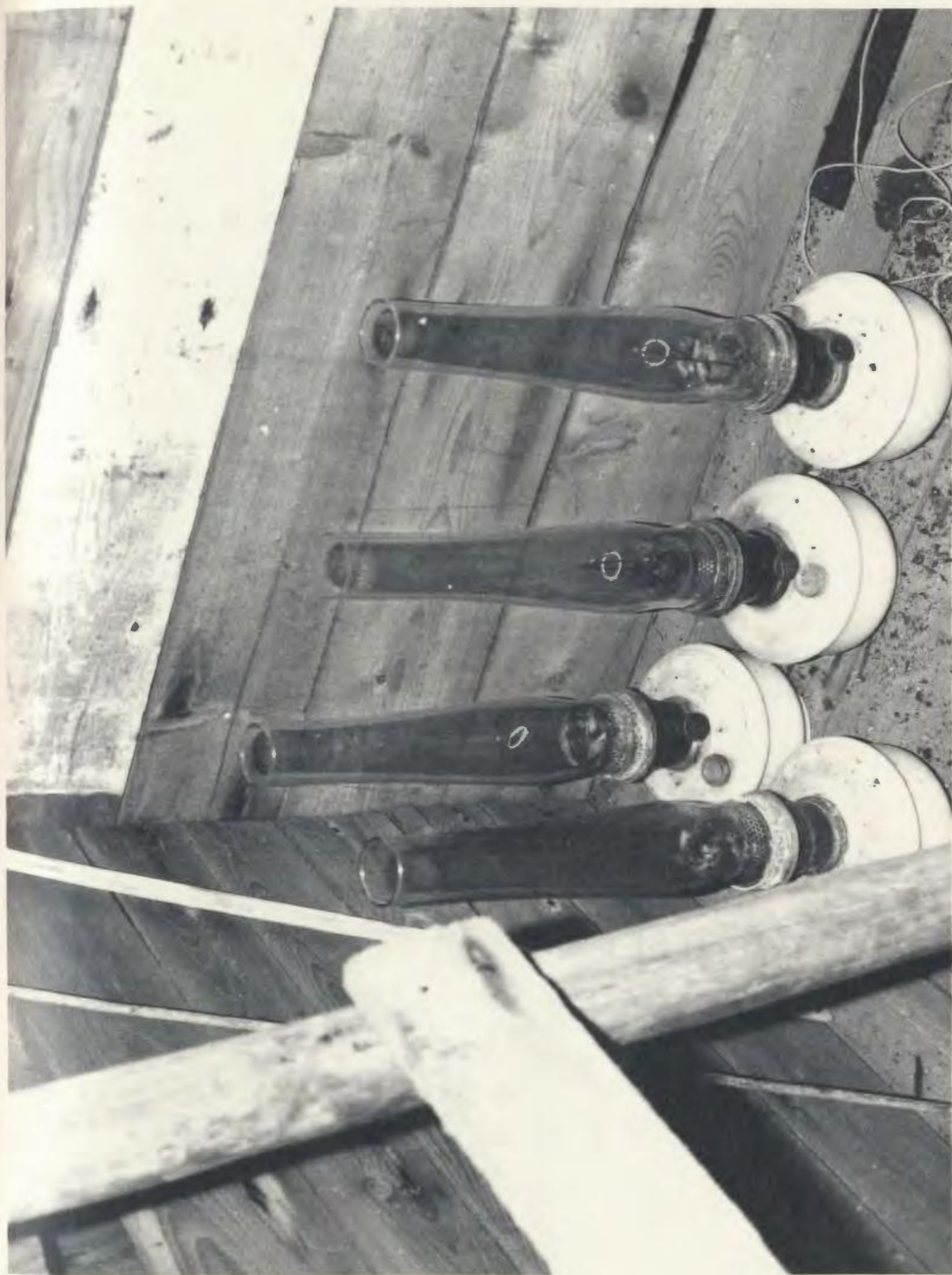


Figure 24. Old carillon keyboard in a tower of the Basilica of St. John the Baptist, St. John's.



CHAPTER 2

AND WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH THE PRICE OF FISH TODAY?:

THE HISTORIC/GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD OF CHURCH BELLS IN
NEWFOUNDLAND, RELATED TO THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

When I worked for the Terra Nova Integrated School Board, the Superintendent would always ask me, "And what's that got to do with the price of fish today?" when he found me doing something the educational value of which he considered a little suspect. Were he to ask me that of my thesis topic, I would have to say that for today, there is little connection as we are no longer buying bells. But, in days gone by, the purchase of bells was dependent on the price of fish and the prosperity of the fishery.

As a result of the research conducted over the past year and a half in the manner outlined in the previous chapter a total of 310 bells have been located. Appendices M, N, O, P, and Q give an alphabetical listing of these bells for the Anglican, Roman Catholic, and United Church denominations, for a group of bells for which the denomination is unknown, and for a further group of bells which are not located on church property. In each of these appendices is noted the source of my information, be it from personal research, from questionnaire returns, or church histories and the like. In addition to the bells outlined in the above five appendices, four Moravian bells were located in Labrador, one in Nain, one in Hopedale, and two in Makkovik, one of which was relocated from Hebron when that community was closed by the Government in 1959. This latter bell is, in fact, one of the oldest bells found to date, and is inscribed "1830." The above information was received from Rev. L. Robinson of the Moravian Church

in Makkovik who had been forwarded my questionnaire by Rev. Francis Buckle of the Anglican Church in Happy Valley where there is no church bell. A further two bells were personally located in St. David's and St. Andrew's Presbyterian churches in St. John's, giving a denominational breakdown as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2

BELLS LOCATED TO DATE, SHOWING DENOMINATIONAL
AND SOURCE BREAKDOWN

	Total Located	Personally Located	Other Sources
Anglican	122	59	63
Moravian	4	0	4
Presbyterian	2	2	0
Roman Catholic	59	39	20
United Church	84	40	44
Denominationally unidentified	27	7	20
Not on church property	12	9	3
Total	310	156	154

If a distribution map were drawn showing the locations of these bells some areas would appear to be better endowed than others. This would, however, be misleading as the results are, in fact, more indicative of areas of personal research, with the subsequent discovery of more bells in those areas, than of regional differentiation. My results also show a predominance of bells in the Anglican churches. Again, I feel it would be unfair to say, based on this, that the tradition is strongest in the

Anglican denomination. The fact is that I have personally researched more Anglican churches than those of the other denominations, and the Anglican Church's provincial publication, The Newfoundland Churchman, is a particularly lucrative source of information. It is unfortunate that my choice of field-work areas was not equally balanced from the denominational point of view, an aspect that I had neglected to consider, and I feel sure that further research on the Southern Shore, and in the Placentia Bay/St. Mary's Bay areas, where there is a large Catholic population, would produce a more accurate view of the general spread of bells between the denominations.

The results do show three major points however; first, the tradition of church bells is province-wide extending from the South Coast to the Northern Peninsula, and from the east to the west coast; second, the tradition is associated only with the older established denominations of the Anglicans, Roman Catholics, United Church, which prior to 1925 was Methodist or Congregational, the Presbyterians, and, in Labrador, the Moravians, and not with the more recently introduced sects such as the Pentecostal, Seventh Day Adventist, and Baptist; and third, the tradition was, at one time, very strong in the province, as indicated by the number of bells located as a result of this research which, in many ways I feel, has only scratched the surface of the available body of material.

Table 3 shows the historic/geographic spread of bells in Newfoundland and Labrador. For the purposes of this table, only those bells whose dates can be accurately established, either from the date itself being stamped on the bell, or from church records or letters received from the foundries, have been included. The table shows the earliest bell to be from 1824, which was found in St. Paul's Anglican Church, in Trinity, Trinity Bay, not surprisingly since this is one of the oldest settled communities in the province, having a longer tradition of established religion. As we trace the influx of the bells, we find that it follows no particular pattern, and shows no particular regional dominance. Amongst the twenty earliest bells the locations range from St. John's to Makkovik and from the South Coast, to Conception, Bonavista and Notre Dame Bays. Thus the influx of the early bells was not restricted to the more densely populated area of the Avalon Peninsula, nor in fact, to those of a more opulent and commercial nature, as suggested by the Makkovik bell of 1830, the resettled bell of 1850 from Placentia Bay, and the Miller's Passage bell of 1860, now located in Harbour Breton. That is not to say, however, that the purchase of bells around the province was not tied to the economic situation at any given time, for indeed it was as a further study of Table 3 will reveal.

From 1824 to 1830, a period of seven years, only two bells were purchased, one in the former year, and one

TABLE 3

HISTORIC/GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD OF BELLS IN
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

N.B. Only bells whose dates are known for certain, either from the markings on the bell, or from written records, have been used in this table.

Date	Community	Denomination	Founder
1824	Trinity, T.B.	Ang.	?
1830	Makkovik, Lab.	Moravian	?
1845	Petty Harbour	Ang.	Whitechapel
1846	St. John's	Ang.	Whitechapel
1850	St. John's, Basilica	R.C.	J. Murphey
1850	Southern Harbour, P.B. (resettled from another community in Placentia Bay.)	R.C.	J. Murphey
1852	Hermitage	Ang.	Whitechapel
1854	St. John's, Basilica	R.C.	J. Murphey
1854	St. John's, Basilica	R.C.	J. Murphey
1854	King's Cove, B.B.	Ang.	J. Murphey
1856	Carbonear, C.B.	R.C.	J. Murphey
1856	Collin's Cove, P.B.	U.C.	Henry W. Hooper
1857	St. John's, Basilica	R.C.	J. Murphey
1860	Harbour Breton (resettled from Miller's Passage.)	R.C.	J. Murphey
1862	Twillingate	Ang.	An English Co.
1862	Joe Batt's Arm	R.C.	J. Murphey
1872	Bonavista	U.C.	?
1874	King's Cove	R.C.	J. Murphey
1877	Fogo	Ang.	Llewellyn & James
1878	St. John's - fire bell		Meneely & Kimberly
1879	Bonavista	Ang.	Warner & Sons
1882	Ramea (resettled)	R.C.	?
1883	St. John's (resettled from Old Perlican U.C.)	Pres.	Warner & Sons
1884	Belleoram	Ang.	Llewellyn & James
1884	Pool's Island	Ang.	Warner & Sons
1884	Catalina	Ang.	Taylor's
1885	English Harbour, T.B.	Ang.	Meneely & Co.
1890	Pouch Cove	Ang.	Meneely & Co.

TABLE 3 (Continued)

Date	Community	Denomination	Founder
1890	Harbour Grace	R.C.	J. Murphey
1896	Champneys	Ang.	Meneely
1896	St. John's	Pres.	C. Millsun & Co.
1898	Weybridge, Random Island	U.C.	Buckeye
1901	Petley, Random Island	Ang.	Meneely Bell Co.
1901	Summerville	R.C.	Meneely Bell Co.
1903	Hermitage (resettled from Pass Island)	Ang.	Meneely & Co.
1904	Sibley's Cove, T.B.	U.C.	M.C. Shane
1905	Trinity, T.B.	R.C.	M.C. Shane
1906	Trouty, T.B.	Ang.	Meneely Bell Co.
1906	Keels, B.B.	Ang.	Meneely Bell Co.
1906	St. John's, Basilica	R.C.	Mathew O'Byrne
1906	St. John's, Basilica	R.C.	Mathew O'Byrne
1906	St. John's, Basilica	R.C.	Mathew O'Byrne
1906	St. John's, Basilica	R.C.	Mathew O'Byrne
1906	St. John's, Basilica	R.C.	Mathew O'Byrne
1907	Burgeo	Ang.	Meneely & Co.
1908	Portugal Cove	Ang.	Meneely & Co.
1908	St. John's	R.C.	Meneely Bell Co.
1908	Newman's Cove	Ang.	Meneely Bell Co.
1910	English Harbour West	Ang.	Meneely & Co.
1911	New Harbour, T.B.	Ang.	Meneely & Co.
1912	St. John's	R.C.	Meneely Bell Co.
1913	North River, C.B.	R.C.	Meneely Bell Co.
1913	Windsor, (relocated from Grand Falls)	Ang.	Meneely & Co.
1915	Torbay	R.C.	Meneely Bell Co.
1915	St. Anthony	Ang.	M.C. Shane
1917	Lance Cove, Bell Island	Ang.	Meneely & Co.
1919	Tilting, Fogo Island	R.C.	Meneely Bell Co.
1921	Rocky Harbour	Ang.	C.S. Bell Co.
1924	Port Blandford	Ang.	Meneely Bell Co.
1925	Francois	Ang.	Meneely & Co.
1926	Perry's Cove	U.C.	Meneely Bell Co.
1928	Joe Batt's Arm, Fogo Is.	Ang.	Meneely & Co.
1930	Hickman's Harbour, Random Island	U.C.	Meneely Bell Co.
1931	King's Cove, B.B.	R.C.	Mathew O'Byrne
1931	Buchans	Ang.	M.C. Shane
1931	Twillingate	U.C.	Whitechapel
1932	St. John's, Cathedral	Ang.	Whitechapel
1933	Pool's Cove	U.C.	Gillett & Johnston
1935	Corner Brook	Ang.	Meneely & Co.
1936	Boxey Harbour	Ang.	Meneely Bell Co.
1948	Lumsden	Ang.	Stoermer
1949	Ramea	Ang.	Stoermer

TABLE 3 (Continued)

Date	Community	Denomination	Founder
1949	Britannia, Random Is.	U.C.	Stoermer
1949	Bunyan's Cove (reset- tled from Ivanhoe.)	Ang.	Stoermer
1949	Moreton's Harbour	?	Stoermer
1949	La Scie	?	Stoermer
1949	Southern Harbour (resettled from Red Is.)	R.C.	?
1950	Bunyan's Cove	U.C.	Stoermer
1950	Baie Verte	U.C.	Stoermer
1950	Norman's Cove	Ang.	Stoermer
1950	Southport	?	Stoermer
1951	Petites	U.C.	Stoermer
1951	Musgrave Harbour	?	Stoermer
1951	Ship's Cove	Ang.	Stoermer
1952	Brunette	?	Stoermer
1952	Coomb's Cove	Ang.	Stoermer
1952	Cottrell's Cove	?	Stoermer
1952	Flat Islands	?	Stoermer
1952	Jackson's Cove	?	Stoermer
1952	Seldom-Come-By, Fogo Is.	Ang.	Whitechapel
1954	Lourdes	R.C.	Blanchet & Co.
1954	Deep Bay, Fogo Is.	Ang.	Gillet & Johnston
1955	Harbour Breton	R.C. ?	Stoermer
1956	Burgeo	U.C.	Stoermer
1956	Hillview	Ang.	Stoermer
1957	Burin	?	Stoermer
1957	Greenspond	?	Stoermer
1958	Cook's Harbour	Ang.	Stoermer
1958	Bonne Bay	U.C.	Stoermer
1958	Brooklyn	?	Stoermer
1958	St. Anthony	U.C.	Taylor's
1958	Springdale	U.C.	Taylor's
1960	Brent's Cove (relocated from Argentia Naval Base.)	R.C.	?
1960	Main Brook	?	Stoermer
1961	Norris Point	?	Stoermer
1962	Jacques Fontaine	Ang.	Stoermer
1962	Daniel's Harbour	Ang.	Whitechapel
1963	Fogo	R.C. ?	Stoermer
1965	Curling	?	Stoermer
1966	Island Harbour, Fogo Is.	Ang.	?

in the latter. This is the beginning of the tradition, and it gets off to a slow and ponderous start. From 1831 to 1844, a period of fourteen years, no bells were purchased in the areas researched. The ponderous beginnings of the tradition and its dormancy for the following fourteen years can be directly related to the economic state of the province at the time. Newfoundland's economy was based, primarily, on the fishing industry which went through a period of decline between 1820 and 1839. Between 1815 and 1819 the gross export value of fish (in thousands of dollars) was 2,968. Between 1820 and 1824 it dropped to 2,175, to 1,942 between 1825 and 1829, and further dropped to 1,840 between 1830 and 1834 before rising to 2,193 between 1835 and 1839 and to 2,673 between 1840 and 1844.¹ The amount of money available for "pleasant indulgences," as Rev. David Joyce referred to bells in his questionnaire return,² therefore, was limited, if not absent, since it was required for basic survival. As the industry stabilised again, with a few years time lag whilst people presumably paid off their debts, money could again be spared to go towards the purchase of church bells. The next dated bell from my research area appears in 1845, and in the eighteen

¹ Figures taken from Table 1 in David Alexander's article, "Newfoundland's Traditional Economy and Development to 1934," in Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Essays in Interpretation, ed., James Hiller and Peter Neary (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1980), p. 20.

² Q80A-38; 9.

years between then and 1862, a total of fourteen bells were purchased. Then follows another dormant period, this time in the nine years between 1863 and 1871, which can again be equated with a decline in the fishing industry between 1865 and 1869. The purchase of bells revived with the upswing in the fishery and eleven bells were bought in the fourteen year period between 1872 and 1885. During the eleven year period between 1886 and 1895 only two bells were purchased, both in 1890, one for Pouch Cove, and one for Harbour Grace. This was an era of sharp economic decline in Newfoundland, as David Alexander explains in his article, "Newfoundland's Traditional Economy and Development to 1934":

Newfoundland's traditional economy underwent a crisis in the late 1880s and 1890s. Export prices for salt codfish sank from \$3.82 a quintal in 1880/4 to \$2.89 in 1895/9 - a collapse of around 32 per cent. Production volumes also fell from about 1.5 million quintals in 1880/4 to some 1.2 million in 1895/9 - a 20 per cent decline. Accordingly, industry gross earnings sagged from \$5.6 million to \$3.6 million - a decline of 36 per cent.³

As a result of this economic crisis unemployment was rampant and money was scarce and would certainly not have been ploughed into extravagant extras in the form of church furnishings. At the beginning of the twentieth century, by a combination of emigration and increased employment through the emergence of secondary industries, the economy of Newfoundland became stable again and with it came bells in torrents. Between 1896 and 1936, a period of forty-two

³Alexander, p. 23.

years, a total of forty-one bells were purchased. It should be remembered at this point that I am basing these remarks only on those bells included in Table 3 for which the date can be confirmed, and that there were probably many more bells in circulation at this time.

The effects of the great economic depression of the 1930s were felt as much in Newfoundland as elsewhere, and this fact is reflected by the decline in the purchase of bells, there being none in the eleven year period between 1937 and 1947. At this time, too, the availability of church bells was severely impaired by the Second World War. During this period, bell foundries in Great Britain, Canada and the U.S.A. were unable to buy copper, one of the components of the bronze alloy of church bells, because it was required for the war effort, and as a result, production temporarily ceased.

Post war, bells again came into circulation, the economy stabilising and then improving after Newfoundland became a province of Canada in 1949. The result was a deluge of bells, forty being purchased in the nineteen year period between 1948 and 1966, with a peak of thirty-one bells in the ten years between 1949 and 1958. The subsequent decline and final cessation of the purchase of bells is a result of the invention and availability of electronic systems and the increased numbers of communities with electrical services. The electronic systems began to appear in the province in the 1960s, the earliest located

to date being that in Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Grand Falls which was installed in 1961, the numbers gradually increasing through the 1970s and into the 1980s. It seems to be the general trend today to install electronic systems, rather than bells, whenever a new church is constructed.

The chronological summary in Table 4 shows that introduction of bells around 1824, a purchasing power directly tied to the economy of the province and a decline in purchase once it became feasible to replace the bell by an electronic system. This does not mean, however, that the tradition has died, for were that the case, the bells would have been discarded, or at least rejected, and bells of over a hundred years old would not still be found or functioning.

Even the introduction of bells to the province was closely associated with the economic situation, as well as, of course, with the establishment of organised religion. Although the first systematic attempt at settlement was made in the first decade of the seventeenth century, when John Guy established a colony in Cupids in 1610, some one hundred years elapsed before any systematic attempt was made to tend to the religious needs of the people. The Anglican denomination was the first to infiltrate the "God-forsaken" colony, sending two missionaries from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPGA) in the early 1700s. Education was in the same state as religion, totally lacking, and the SPGA took on the joint responsibility of

TABLE 4

SUMMARY OF PURCHASING AND NON-PURCHASING PERIODS
IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH BELL IN
NEWFOUNDLAND

Year	Time Period	No. of Bells	Remarks
1824-1830	7 yrs.	2	Slow beginnings.
1831-1844	14 yrs.	0	Slump in fishery.
1845-1862	18 yrs.	14	Economy stabilises.
1863-1871	9 yrs.	0	Slump in fishery.
1872-1885	14 yrs.	11	Economy stabilises.
1886-1895	11 yrs.	2	Economic crisis.
1896-1936	42 yrs.	41	Secondary industries established - greater employment & more stable economy.
1937-1947	11 yrs.	0	1930s Depression & World War II - foundries not casting bells.
1948-1966	19 yrs.	40	Nfld. joins Canada, industry & employment increase; economic situation improves.
1967-1981	15 yrs.	0	Electronic systems replace church bells.

secular and religious education, establishing their first church and school in Bonavista in 1722. It was not until 1766 that the first Methodist missionary arrived on the island, establishing a school in Harbour Grace. The Moravians, meanwhile, began their missionary "on the Labrador" around 1764. By law, Roman Catholic priests were prohibited in the territory until 1784 but despite this, several were "unofficially" serving the needs of their people before that time.

As missionaries increased in numbers, organised religion gradually became established in Newfoundland and in time churches began to replace the old school meeting rooms. The construction of these buildings, however, was a tremendous financial strain on any community and it is not surprising, therefore, to find a lapse of some one hundred years before bells finally, though slowly, began to appear, and a lapse of over two hundred years between the arrival of the first settlers and the purchase of the first bell.

Table 5 shows the nineteen foundries represented by bells in Newfoundland, with a breakdown of their known supply to each denomination. Of these foundries, eight are American, one Canadian, one French, one Scottish, two Irish, and six English. By referring back to Table 3, it is interesting to note that the earliest bells in the province came from Britain, and that the different denominations seem to be favouring their respective cultural heritages, the Anglican and United Church people buying from the

TABLE 5

BELL FOUNDRIES REPRESENTED IN NEWFOUNDLAND SHOWING THE
BREAKDOWN OF SUPPLY BY DENOMINATION

Company	Ang.	R.C.	U.C.	D.U.B.*	Total
American Bell Foundry Co. Northville, Mich., U.S.A.	1	0	1	0	2
Blanchet & Co. Paris-Bagnolet, France.	0	1	0	0	1
Blymer Bells The Cincinnati Bell Foundry Co., Cincinnati, Ohio, U.S.A.	1	0	1	0	2
The C.S. Bell Co., Hillsboro, Ohio, U.S.A.	2	2	4	2	10
Gillett & Johnston Founders, Croyden, England.	1	0	1	0	2
The Goulds Mfg. Co., Seneca Falls, N.Y., U.S.A.	0	0	1	0	1
Henry W. Hooper England.	0	0	1	0	1
Llewellyn & James, Bristol, England.	2	0	0	0	2
Meneely Bell Co., Troy, N.Y., U.S.A.	7	6	2	0	15
Meneely & Co., West Troy, N.Y., U.S.A.	17	3	0	0	20
C. Millsun & Co., Glasgow, Scotland	0	0	Pres.	0	1
J. Murphey Founder, Dublin, Ireland.	1	10	0	0	11

TABLE 5 (Continued)

Company	Ang.	R.C.	U.C.	D.U.B.*	Total
Mathew O'Byrne, Fountain Head Bell Foundry, James's St., Dublin, Ireland.	0	6	0	0	6
M.C. Shane Bell Foundry Co. Baltimore, Md., U.S.A.	2	1	1	0	4
Stoermer Bell & Brass Foundry, P.O. Box 20, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada.	10	(2)	7	14	33
John Taylor & Co. Founders, Loughborough, England.	1	0	2	0	3
The E.W. Vanduzen Co., Buckeye Bell Foundry, Cincinnati, Ohio, U.S.A.	0	0	1	0	1
John Warner & Sons, London, England.	2	0	Pres.	0	3
Whitechapel Bell Foundry. Also known as C. & G. Mears Founders, and Mears & Stainbank of Whitechapel, London, England.	6	0	1	0	7

*D.U.B. = Denominationally Unidentified Bell.

English based firms, the Roman Catholics from the Irish based firms, and the Presbyterians, in 1896, buying from the Scottish firm of C. Millsun and Co. At this time the clergymen would have been immigrants from Britain, and would have been more familiar with, and more able to locate British bell foundries than those in either Canada or the United States, which would explain this early domination by these companies. The first American bell, which appeared in 1878, was bought not for religious purposes, but by the Government of Newfoundland as a fire alarm for the town of St. John's which, with its terraced wooden houses, was prone to devastation from conflagrations, the "Great" ones occurring in 1817, 1846, and 1892. The first American bell bought for religious purposes was in 1885 in English Harbour, from the firm Meneely & Co., and the name Meneely dominates the market from then until 1936. When I began my research and noticed the founder's mark, Meneely Bell Co., Troy, New York, and Meneely & Co., West Troy, New York, I presumed, wrongly, that it was one firm that had changed location. Subsequent letters to all the bell foundries represented in this province resulted in my receiving a telephone call from Mr. Eugene Burns of the Historical Society in Troy to whom my letter to the Meneely Company had been forwarded by the post office. Mr. Burns is, like myself, a bell enthusiast, and the telephone wires were fairly humming for half an hour or so. His interest lies particularly with the older firm of Meneely & Co., West

Troy, New York, which he has been researching for the past ten years. It transpires that the old "Meneely Bell Foundry" was established in 1826 by Andrew Meneely, it became "Andrew Meneely & Son" in 1850 and, after the death of the father, the son Edwin A. Meneely was joined by his brother George R. Meneely and the firm became known as "Andrew Meneely's Sons" in 1851, changing to "E.A. & G.R. Meneely" in 1863. Strife apparently arose between the brothers and in 1876 George R. Meneely left the company, moved to Troy, New York and set up his own firm of, according to our fire bell of 1878, Meneely and Kimberley. He must have later decided to change the name of his business for there followed numerous law suits between the two brothers disputing ownership of the "name" of the company, the West Troy firm finally retaining Meneely & Co., the Troy firm becoming Meneely Bell Co. And thus they continued in competition with each other until the 1890s when both companies went out of business, the records from the West Troy company being lost in a fire shortly thereafter. Mr. Burns is attempting to trace every bell made by the latter company which explains his enthusiasm on the arrival of my letter containing a list of the thirty-two Meneely bells that I had located here. He was even more excited when I was able to tell him from which Meneely company each one came, except, I confess, for the one in St. Nicholas' Anglican Church in Champneys where "sloppy" research habits caused me to write down only the word Meneely. I was very

happy, though somewhat surprised, to find that my research on the bells of Newfoundland could be of help to someone outside the province, and I now find myself looking at Meneely bells with renewed interest. I had found fifteen bells from the Troy company, and seventeen from the West Troy firm (see Appendices R and S), and from copies of old company documents forwarded to me by Mr. Burns, I have been able to add another two to the list. One which was sent to Our Lady of Mercy Roman Catholic Church in Port-au-Port West and was moved to Maria Regina Roman Catholic Church in Port-au-Port East in 1963 when an electronic system was placed in the former church; and one sent to "Catholic Church at Bay of Islands, Newfoundland." Bay of Islands being a geographic region rather than an actual community, I do not know, as yet, the precise location of this bell. The third bell mentioned in the list was sent to the Roman Catholic Church on the Island of St. Brendan's in Bonavista Bay and was still hanging there until 22 February 1981 when the church burnt, the bell melting in the heat.

By referring again to Table 3 it is possible to determine the period of popularity of the different foundries, whilst bearing in mind that some companies are not represented here because their bells are undated, and in some cases not all the bells of a particular company are represented, for the same reason. The American companies, particularly the two Meneelies, became prominent and prolific at the beginning of the twentieth century and had

more or less taken over the business of the British firms. This is, perhaps, indicative of Newfoundland's economic ties which were, at that time, growing away from Great Britain and towards North America in general. Their peak period came between 1900 and 1930, after which a few English bells appear on the scene again, the Great Depression following, with a lull in activity for eleven years. Bells appear again in 1948 at which time the market is commandeered by the Canadian firm of Stoermer, the imminent approach of Confederation with Canada, and the close of the two Meneely firms no doubt affecting the consumers. But, faithful as ever, the two surviving English foundries subtly remind us of their existence with the odd bell or two in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Purchase from Stoermer was not uninfluenced by their advertising which appeared in the national church magazines, as was their eventual decline by the advertising of Schulmerich Carillons Inc., who offered bells, carillons and, what was to be the cause of the demise of the church bell in Newfoundland, electronic systems.

Thus the bells tell their own stories from the dates, and the names of the founders stamped on their waists. But, many bells have a lot more to say from their inscriptions, and in the next chapter I will look at the tradition of bell inscriptions as it developed in England, and as it exists today in Newfoundland.

CHAPTER 3

"Mankind, like us, too oft are found
Possessed of nought but empty sound"¹

CHURCH BELL INSCRIPTIONS; THEIR DEVELOPMENT IN GREAT BRITAIN RELATED TO THEIR FORM FOUND IN THE NEWFOUNDLAND CONTEXT

¹Church bell inscription of 1798 from Bakewell, Derbyshire, in George S. Tyack, A Book About Bells (London, 1898; rpt. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Gryphon Books, 1971), p.

As soon as bell makers learned to cast bells instead of hammering them into shape or riveting pieces of iron together, possibilities of decoration opened, for it was not a difficult matter to cast letters and ornamental designs on the bells. This was done by making these designs on the wax or clay models which gave the exact shape of the future bell, and when the model was removed and the molten metal poured into the cavity, it took the exact form of the model - shape, letters and all. It was most natural that the maker of such an important thing as a bell should wish to inscribe something on it.²

It is these inscriptions that will form the body of material to be looked at in this chapter. Table 6 shows a typology of inscriptions from the British context and follows the natural time sequence of their development. I will discuss these inscriptions under each type heading in an attempt to show how the style of this communicative mode has changed over time, at the same time showing why these changes took place, that is, how the inscriptions were affected by the social, political and economic environment, the changes in these environments, and the resultant changes in the attitude of man. It should be pointed out at this juncture, however, that there is no absolute cut-off date, or initiation date for any one type, and some cover a time span of several hundred years.

After dealing with the development of the British tradition I will move on to the Newfoundland examples to show which types of inscriptions diffused to and adapted

²Satis N. Coleman, Bells: Their History, Legends, Making, and Uses (1928; rpt. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1971), p. 74.

TABLE 6

TYPOLOGY OF CHURCH BELL INSCRIPTIONS FROM
THE BRITISH TRADITION

4. Inscription Type	Time-span in Centuries
1. Early markings	Pre-13
2. Scriptural and liturgical quotations	13-20
3. Dedication to a Saint, or the Madonna	14-16 (19-20)
4. Invocation to a Saint, the Holy Trinity, Jesus, and God	14-20
5. Founder named	14-20
6. Donor named	15-20
7. Bells speak	15-20
8. Bell outlines its function	16-20
9. Self-praising bell	16-18 (19-20)
10. Inter-foundry rivalries	16-18 (19)
11. Allusion to change ringing	17-20
12. Subscribers acknowledged and bells recast	16-18 (19-20)
13. Historical events commemorated	16-20
14. Miscellaneous	

to this new location. Those examples cited from Newfoundland were acquired from personal field research, from questionnaire returns and other written sources. My examples of British inscriptions are taken from various books noted in the bibliography and constitute just a small sample of what is to be found in that country. My method of selection has been two-fold; on the first count they are representative of the general style of the type, and on the second count, they hold personal appeal, for which I make no apology. On many of the older bells found in Britain the inscriptions contain spelling errors, reversed letters and poor grammar. To avoid having to constantly note this fact in the body of the text, I point out here that inscriptions are quoted exactly as found on the bells.

It can be seen from the typology that many of the inscription "types" have had a long history whilst others were comparatively short lived. From the type headings it can also be seen that the inscriptions from the sixteenth century and later, that is, those of the post-Reformation period, have a decidedly more secular flavour, but this aspect will become more apparent by looking at the inscriptions themselves.

Type 1. - Early Markings

The early bells, handcrafted by the monks before the refinement of the casting technique, bore simple marks of their religious affinities such as the cross and other sacred symbols. Later these decorations became more

florid and finally letters began to appear. Short passages from the Scriptures or Liturgy were inscribed on the bells in Latin, the language of the church, and these formed the earliest of inscriptions.

Type 2. - Scriptural and Liturgical Quotations

The earliest foundries were either run by the monks or closely associated with them, with the result that the inscriptions of the early "cast" bells were of this scriptural or liturgical nature. In Brailles, Warwickshire, a bell, recast in facsimile of its predecessor, bears an inscription comprising part of the sequence of the seven joys of the Virgin Mary. An old bell in Lyneham, Wiltshire, bears part of the sequence from the Sarum Breviary, whilst one in Reading is composed of the first words of the Pater Noster and the Apostle's Creed.³ More common and widespread examples include the following inscriptions:

Te deum Laudamus.	(Eastbourne, Sussex)
Venite Exultemus Domino.	(Peterborough Cathedral)
Christe audi nos.	(Westminster Abbey)
God save the young.	(Clapham, Bedfordshire) ⁴

Later, as more bells were added to the tower, it was quite common to find the quotations split between the bells:

³H.B. Walters, Church Bells (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1937), p. 15.

⁴Benjamin Lomax, Bells and Bellringers (London: H.J. Infield, 1879), p. 41.

Treble: Glory be to God in the highest,

2nd: And in earth peace,

3rd: Goodwill towards men.⁵

This latter series of inscriptions is obviously of a later date, evidenced by the fact that it is in English, a change brought about by the Reformation of the sixteenth century.

Type 3. - Dedication to a Saint, or the Madonna

The usual medieval practice was to dedicate the bell in honour of the Madonna or a Saint, his or her name being inscribed on it:

Maria. (Brattleby, Lincolnshire)

Virgo Maria. (Farrington Gurney, Somerset)⁶

Ista Campana Facta est in Honore Sta. Andree.

(Northborough, Northamptonshire)

Pro Thome Laude Resonabo Modo Sine Fraude.

(Marston St. Lawrence, Northamptonshire)

In Thomae Laude Resono Bim Bom Sine Fraude.

("Mighty Tom" of Oxford)⁷

A rough translation of the latter would be "For Thomas' sake I cry Bim Bom and no mistake."

⁵Tom Ingram, Bells in England (London: Frederick Muller, 1954), p. 20.

⁶Tyack, p. 56.

⁷Tyack, p. 57.

Type 4. -- Invocation to a Saint, the
Holy Trinity, Jesus and God

From this simple dedication embossed on the bell developed an invocation to the Saint with the addition of Ora Pro Nobis (pray for us), sometimes shortened to O.P.N. The invocation was further developed with the inclusion of some pertinent information about the Saint to whom it referred, as on a bell dedicated to St. Christopher in Willington, Bedfordshire, which bears the following inscription

O Martir Xrofore Pro Nobis Semper Orate.⁸

which includes the suggestion that the Saint pray on behalf of the people whenever the bell sounds.

Sometimes a bell is dedicated to one person whilst carrying an invocation to another, an example perhaps of double indemnity, as found at Dorchester, Oxon:

Virginis egregine dicor Campana Marioe,
S.T.O.P.N. (Santa Thoma, Ora Pro Nobis.)⁹

This type of dedication and invocation is not restricted to the Madonna and the Saints, but is also found, though less frequently, applied directly to God, as in

God send us all the bliss of heaven,
Anno Dni 1627.¹⁰

the Holy Trinity, as on the 10th bell at Christ Church, Oxford (1589)

⁸ Tyack, p. 57.

⁹ Lomax, p. 42.

¹⁰ Coleman, p. 77.

Trinitate sacra fiat haec campana beata.¹¹

and on "Great Tom" of Lincoln (recast 1835)

Spiritus Sanctus a Patre et Filio
Procedens Suaviter Sonans ad Salutem.¹²

and to Jesus, as in the rhymed inscription below, found at
Alkborough, Lincolnshire:

Jesu for yi Modir sake
Save all ye sauls that me gart make.¹³

The following was an extremely popular and widespread
inscription during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,
and although of such an early date, it has a surprisingly
modern ring to it:

Jhesus be our speed 1589. (Wakerley, Northampton-
shire)¹⁴

The above four types of inscriptions are restricted
to religious texts of sentiments befitting the role of the
bell as a sacred part of the church's furnishings, function-
ing to call people to prayer, as an invocation to the
saints on their behalf, and as a preservation from evil
influences. In the fifteenth century, however, we see the
beginnings of the infiltration of a secular element with
the inclusion of the name of the founder. It was at about
this time that the founders were forming themselves into
guilds and this, coupled with a certain amount of pride
in their workmanship and an element of free advertising,

¹¹Tyack, p. 71.

¹²Tyack, p. 71.

¹³Willingham Franklin Rawnsley, Highways and Byways
in Lincolnshire (London: Macmillan, 1914), p. 197.

¹⁴Tyack, p. 73.

resulted in the recording of their names, and often the date, on the bells.

Type 5. - Founder Named

Even within this type of inscription we find variation in the way in which the information is communicated. In Finden, Sussex, an inscription gives the facts with a sacred reminder as to why the bell was made:

I Col Belfunder mad me,
1576, I.H.S.¹⁵

An even simpler statement of the fact is found on St. Peter's bell at Cambridge:

Ricardus Bowler, me fecit, 1602.¹⁶

A founder "fancying himself as a bit of a poet" may put the information in the form of a rhyme as is found in Eydon, Northants:

Be yt knowne to all that doth me see
That Newcombe of Leicester made me. 1603.¹⁷

The fact that the date rhymes with the "poetic" phrase is, in this instance, purely coincidental since the same rhyme is found on a bell he cast for St. Mary's Church, Oxford, in 1619.

There are occasions, however, when the "founding poet" intentionally incorporates the date into the rhyme:

¹⁵Tyack, p. 73.

¹⁶Tyack, p. 73.

¹⁷Tyack, p. 75.

Mathew Bagley Made Me
1693.¹⁸

The really creative poet even included puns in his rhyme, as with Henry Pleasant who was productive in the eighteenth century, and who placed the following inscription on a bell in Towcester:

When four this steeple long did hold
They were the emblems of a scold,
No music:
But we shall see
What pleasant music six will be.¹⁹

Of course, the calibre of the rhymed inscription was dependent on the abilities of its founder composer, and the clever subtlety of the previous example is an exception in quality rather than the rule. A distinctly different reaction is evoked from the following:

Samuel Knight made this ring
In Binstead steeple for to ding. 1695.²⁰

Type 6. - Donor Named

Another secular infiltration is seen at this time with the naming of the donor. The early forms of this type of inscription had a twofold function. First, in gratitude, the name of the donor was commemorated on the bell for present and future eyes to see. Second, prayers for the donor were invited, either from those reading the inscription, or by the intercession of the Saints or the Holy

¹⁸ Coleman, p. 78.

¹⁹ Tyack, p. 76.

²⁰ Coleman, p. 78.

Trinity:

Remember John Whitmel, Isabel, his wife,
and Wm. Rus who first gave this bell.

(Westminster Abbey, 1430)²¹

A Thov Blyssid Trinite
Of Brian Rodlyff haf pyte.

(Cowthorpe, Yorkshire)

Oh your charite prai for the soulles of
John Slutter, John Hunt, William Slutter, 1536.

(Botolph's, Sussex)²²

At Aldbourne in Wiltshire, the tenor bell bears an inscription in the form of a prayer for the souls of Richard Godard of Upham and his two wives. This apparently is the only record of his double marriage.²³ A subtle confession, perhaps, on the part of Mr. Godard. A bell, dated 1544, in St. Peter's, Nottingham, also carries an inscription of this type:

Ave Maria of your charitie for to pray
for the soul of Margere Dubbleday.²⁴

By the latter part of the sixteenth century, as a result of the influences of the Reformation and the attempt to reform Catholicism, these pious prayers for the donor begin to disappear. The inscriptions of this nature were shortened to a mere statement of fact:

²¹Lomax, p. 44.

²²Walters, p. 15.

²³Walters, p. 15.

²⁴Ingram, p. 83.

The Ladie Doratie Chandos, Widdowe, made this.

(Chapel of Sudeley Castle)

The gift of John Bubb. A. Rudhall, 1694.

(Stapleton)

7 (A. Rudhall was the name of the founder)

The gift of John Astrey, Esq., 1702.

(Westerleigh)²⁵

This type of inscription appears to be a transition between those preceding, with their pious or sacred prayers, and those following, with their quite mundane, if not profane elements:

Jane Eyer gave twenty pound
To meck me a losty sound. 1703.

(Bentley, Hampshire)²⁶

All you of Bath that heare me sound
Thank Lady Hopton's hundred pound,
Abra. Rudhall cast us all Ano. Do. 1774

(Bath Abbey)²⁷

Thus we see the complete disappearance of the prayer for the souls of the dead donor, a distinct lack of praise for either God, the Holy Trinity, or the Saints, and a move toward eternal gratitude to the donor himself; a move towards the praise of the donor and away from the praise of the deity. A bell of 1827 is the epitome of this new direction in emphasis:

²⁵ Tyack, p. 74.

²⁶ Tyack, p. 74.

²⁷ Anonymous, Bath Abbey Information Leaflet (England: n.p., n.d.), n. pag.

Squire Arundel the great my whole expense did raise 28
Nor shall our tongues abate to celebrate his praise.

It might appear from the above that the founder, or more probably the donor who might well have indicated the type of wording he would like to see on his bell, has let his wealth and status in society rise to such a degree that he has cut himself off from that society and put himself above it in the manner of replacing the Saints and even, perhaps, God. But this was not the case. Admittedly the inscriptions are pompous, to say the least, and lacking in sacred aspirations, but this was not an attitude restricted to donors and founders. Society had changed, and its members had new values and ideals. The Reformation was over and Protestantism had been established. With it came the church service in the vernacular language and a subsequent decline in the use of Latin in bell inscriptions, and the idea that Saints were no more than Papish idols with a subsequent decline in belief in them and a substantial reduction in the number recognised by the Protestant churches. Hand in hand with this went the decline in belief in their value as intermediaries between God and the people and they were no longer required for prayers of intercession. In addition, the disbelief in the existence of purgatory on the part of the Protestants relieved the need of prayers for the souls of the dead.

²⁸Ingram, p. 22.

If there was a decline in the importance of religious entities, there was a corresponding rise in the importance of man himself. More emphasis was placed on his works and achievements, greater value was placed on man and self, and, in general, man's ego was given a tremendous boost, as is evidenced in the foregoing examples of donor inscriptions.

The same change can be seen to be taking place in the words spoken by the bells. Early bells were given names, as noted earlier, and were dedicated or "baptised" which endowed them with special powers, especially as preservers from evil and harm. It was a natural development that they would be endowed with personality and the ability to speak. Many of the inscriptions already cited bear this out, but to show how their personality and ego developed alongside of man's, I will look at them in more detail here.

Type 7. - Bells Speak

When the bells first began to speak, they, like man, concentrated on the praise of the deity:

God be our guyd. I.W. 1583.

(Winterbourne Dantsey)

Praise God, 1595.

(Fortherghay, Northantsire)

Praysed be thy name O Lord, 1580.

(Chichester)²⁹

As time went on, Royalty came to be included with the deity:

Fear God, Honour the King.

(Brighton)

Ye people all who hear us ring,
Be faithful to your God and King.

(Hurstpierport)³⁰

Our voices shall in concert ring,
In honour both to God and King.

(Knaresborough)³¹

Often the King or Queen was specifically named, as for example in Hemel Hempstead

God Save King James, 1604.³²

although, for some reason, this does not seem to have been the case for Charles I during whose reign inscriptions of this type simply ran "God Save the King." James II, on the other hand, who was very unpopular and who only reigned for three years, does not seem to have been commemorated at all. This lack of commemoration on the church bell speaks as loudly about the people's feelings towards James II as does the following example, commemorating the sixtieth birthday of Elizabeth I, of their feelings towards her:

²⁹Tyack, p. 73.

³⁰Lomax, p. 42.

³¹Tyack, p. 86.

³²Tyack, p. 86.

Today for sixty years we've been
The subjects of one gracious Queen,
So as those days are ended now,
With thanks to God this bell we vow.

(Upottery, Devonshire)³³

As well as proclaiming in the name of the monarch,
the bell was also endowed with qualities of profound wisdom:

All you who hear my mournful sound
Repent before you lie in ground,
And seek the Lord while here you breathe,
There's no repentance after death.

(Wolverhampton)³⁴

Many inscriptions seem to favour this constant reminder
that death looms near.

My roaring sound doth warning give
That man cannot heare allwaies live

(Fotherby, Lincolnshire, 1608)³⁵

and that certain preparations should be made:

When you hear this mournful sound
Prepare yourself for underground.

(Addington, 1658)³⁶

On some bells it is simply stated "Remember Death", or
"Prepare to die", both widespread and popular in the seven-
teenth and eighteenth centuries, aligning with the world
view of the period and its Memento Mori tradition.

³³ Tyack, p. 88.

³⁴ Lomax, p. 42.

³⁵ Tyack, p. 82.

³⁶ Tyack, p. 82.

The vocal bells were not, however, restricted to topics of royalty and death, but also expounded sentiments of secular preservation and prosperity:

God preserve our Church and State.

Peace and Good Neighbourhood.

Success to the British Armies.

May the Trade of the City Increase.

Prosperity to the Parish.

(all in St. Stephen's, Bristol)³⁷

It is not difficult to see from the above examples just where man's interest lies at this time. In keeping with this sentiment, of peace, prosperity and material wealth, a bell in Elsing in Norfolk proclaims:

Cursed be all Church Robbers.³⁸

Type 8. - Bell Outlines its Function

The church bell has a multitude of functions ranging from calling parishioners to worship, to abating storms and repulsing pestilence. These functions it announces in many inscriptions, as well as in its actual use, and a broad array is outlined in the following popular inscription, originally in Latin, but on later bells used in parts and translated into English:

Laudo Deum verum,
plebem voco,
conjugo clerum;

I praise the true God,
I summon the people,
I assemble the clergy;

³⁷ Mary Cockett, Bells in Our Lives (London: David and Charles, 1973), p. 77.

³⁸ Walters, p. 16.

defunctus ploro,	I mourn the dead,
pestem fugo,	I put the plague to flight,
7 festa decoro;	I grace the feast;
funera plango,	I wail at a funeral,
fulgura flango,	I abate the lightning,
Sabbata plango;	I proclaim the Sabbath;
excito lentos,	I arouse the lazy,
dissipo ventos	I scatter the winds
paco cruentos.	I soften the cruel. 39

Where only one church bell exists, it would have to fill these various roles, but in a tower which housed more than one bell each would be assigned specific functions. The individual functions most commonly recorded in inscriptions are: the call to worship; the Passing Bell, which was extremely popular and widespread through time and space and rang when it was seen that death was imminent and the soul was about to pass from the body; wedding bells; protection from storms, pestilence and fire; and the Curfew Bell, rung to announce the beginning and end of the working day and as a reminder to cover fires for the night. From this we gain some idea of those aspects considered important to life, these seven functions marking the most important events to man. The first and last call man to worship, work and rest; the wedding and Passing bells mark two of the major epochs of man's life; and the others protect him from, and warn him against his three worst enemies: storms, sickness, and fire.

Again there is variation in the communication style of the message, ranging from the genteel poetry of

I sweetly tolling do men call
To taste of meat that feeds the soul.

(Winthorpe, Lincolnshire, 1604)⁴⁰

to the more mundane rhyme of

When I do call come serve God all.

(Erome)⁴¹

to the blatant statement found in Thorpe St. Peter, in
Lincolnshire:

When I call, come to church.⁴²

Perhaps one of the most popular call to worship inscriptions
of the seventeenth century is:

That all may come and none may stay at home
I ring to sermon with a lusty bome.⁴³

The Passing Bell was traditionally rung when it was
seen that the death of a sick person was imminent. Originally
it was believed that the sound of the bell would
scare away any marauding spirits of a malevolent nature,
thus giving the departing soul a free passage to the after-
life. It also served as an announcement to the rest of
the community that the person was about to die, and as a
reminder to them to pray for his departing soul. The
instruction is quite explicit in the inscription found on
the Passing Bell in Middleton-in-Teesdale, in Durham County:

⁴⁰ Rawnsley, p. 313.

⁴¹ Tyack, p. 84.

⁴² Tyack, p. 84.

⁴³ Ingram, p. 20.

telle soulle knelle at his ending and for
his soul say one pater noster and one ave.

1557⁴⁴

Many of the inscriptions also bear a reminder of the need
to repent before death:

I sound to bed the sick repent,
In hope of life when breath is spent.

(1660)⁴⁵

All men that hear my mornfvll soonde
Repent before yov ly in ground.

(York, 1645)⁴⁶

The other rite of passage of major importance in
man's life, marriage, is a much more pleasant and joyful
occasion, and this sentiment is expressed in the inscrip-
tions found on wedding bells:

When female virtue weds with manly worth,
We ring with rapture and we spread it forth.⁴⁷

In wedlock bands, all you who join
With hands your hearts unite
So shall our tuneful tongues combine
To bless the nuptial rite.⁴⁸

As mentioned earlier, when bells were first placed
in the tower they were blessed before being used liturgi-
cally, the term "baptised" also being used for the cere-
mony in the Christian religion. In his book Questions

⁴⁴Walters, p. 42.

⁴⁵Ingram, p. 21.

⁴⁶Coleman, p. 77.

⁴⁷Ingram, p. 22.

⁴⁸Lomax, p. 57.

Asked by Protestants Briefly Answered, Rev. M. Phillips

describes the ceremony in the following manner:

Amid beautiful prayers the bells are washed with holy water, that they may become a pure agency in the worship of God. They are anointed with oil for the sick in the form of a cross, then seven times outwardly with the same oil, and seven times inwardly with holy chrism. The sevenfold unction with oil and chrism signify the fountains of grace flowing through the seven sacraments to which the bells call us. Thymia, incense and myrrh are burned under the bell. This fumigation symbolises the fragrance of prayer to which the bells call us. The gospel of Mary and Martha is read because the bells call us to the one thing necessary: the hearing of God's word. A name is then given to the consecrated bell, because by their respective names the bells are distinguished from one another and are placed under the protection of a patron saint.⁴⁹

John Gilmary Shea, in The Catholic Educator, adds to this that the priest

repeatedly prays that the sound of the bell may avail to summon the faithful, to excite their devotion, to drive away storms, and to terrify evil spirits. This power of course is due to the blessings and prayers of the Church, not to any efficacy superstitiously attributed to the bell itself. Thus consecrated, bells become spiritual things, and cannot be rung without the consent of the ecclesiastical authority.⁵⁰

Thus the bells were believed to be endowed with special powers which enabled them to act as protectors against thunder, lightning, hail, wind, and storms of every kind, and to drive away evil spirits. It was a fairly common belief at those times that the air was filled with evil

⁴⁹ Rev. M. Phillips, Questions Asked by Protestants Briefly Answered (Milwaukee, Wisc.: Diederich-Schaefer, 1900), p. 20.

⁵⁰ John Gilmary Shea, The Catholic Educator (New York: John Duffy, 1889), p. 55.

spirits, and these were thought to be the cause of storms, and upsets of the meteorological type as well as of the human emotional and physical type. It was a common belief also that metal, and subsequently ringing metal, had an influence over these spirits, and with the double indemnity of a religious baptism the bell was considered to be particularly potent. In consequence we find amongst the bell's functions that of calming a storm:

Do thou, Peter, when rung,
calm the angry waves.

(Durham)⁵¹

Lightening and Thunder
I break assunder.⁵²

1705 Defunctus Ploro Caelum
Reddoque Serenum.⁵³

The latter, when roughly translated, means "I lament the dead, and restore a serene sky." In a similar fashion, reference is made to their driving away pestilence and the plague:

Pestum Fugo.

(Gillsborough, Northamptonshire)

Assis Festivus Pius at Fugat Agnus.

(May the festival lamb be near at hand, that He may of His goodness put plagues to flight.)⁵⁴

⁵¹ Coleman, p. 75.

⁵² Ernest Morris, Legend of the Bells (London: Sampson Low, Marston, n.d.), p. 12.

⁵³ Morris, p. 15.

⁵⁴ Morris, p. 42.

The bells seemed to have functioned with some degree of success for we find in St. Andrew's Church in Grimsby, on a bell dated 1871, the following inscription:

Voce Mea Laudo Dominum pro Peste Fugata.

(With my voice I praise the Lord for
Pestilence banished.)⁵⁵

A function of a more secular nature was the bell's use as a fire alarm and many bells, before the days of telephone communication and modern fire sirens, were used exclusively for this purpose. One such bell in Sherborne Abbey is inscribed

J W I C 1652

Lord quench this furious flame
Arise, run, help put out the same.⁵⁶

a joint plea for God's intervention and human assistance. Other examples omit the call for divine help:

I am, and have been called the Common Bell,
To ring when fire breaks out to tell.

(St. Michael's, Coventry)⁵⁷

When backwards rung we tell of fire,
Think how the world shall thus expire.

(St. Ives)⁵⁸

One of the earliest of the secular uses of the church and monastery bells was the Curfew bell. Basically this meant that fires should be covered or "banked" for the

⁵⁵ Morris, p. 42.

⁵⁶ Ingram, p. 86.

⁵⁷ Lomax, p. 51.

⁵⁸ Tyack, p. 84.

night, and nocturnal perambulations and social life should end for the day. In the ninth century Alfred the Great ordered the Curfew bell to be rung in Oxfordshire nightly at 8 o'clock, and although it was probably of much more widespread use by the eleventh century, William the Conqueror required it to be rung, by law, throughout the country at that time. It was later confused with the Ave or Angelus Bell which rang three times a day to call people to prayer, and latterly it developed into a bell which announced the beginning and ending of the working day

I ring at six to let men know
When to and from their work to go.

(Coventry, 1675)⁵⁹

or somewhat more cryptically:

Arise and go about your business.

(St. Ives)⁶⁰

Once the bell had gained this power of speech, it was not long before it was no longer merely describing its job, but also telling of how well it did it.

Type 9. - Self-Praising Bell.

When the bells began to exhibit this trait of self-approval, it was in a fairly mild form such as

Beatus est populus exaudiunt clangorem.

(Tanfield)⁶¹

⁵⁹Coleman, p. 77.

⁶⁰Tyack, p. 85.

⁶¹Lomax, p. 43.

but they gradually became more egotistical

I am little smart and small
Luck made me concord to all.

Our sound is good our shape is neat
It's Davis' cast us so complete.⁶²

When we doe ring I sweetly sing.⁶³

finally becoming totally conceited:

Although I am both light and small
I will be heard above you all.

(Blexhill, Sussex)

If you have a judicious ear
You'll own my voice is sweet and clear.

(Illurstpierpoint)

I mean to make it understood
That though I'm little, I am good.

(Hove, Sussex)⁶⁴

This is a fascinating aspect of bell inscriptions whereby the bell founder, obviously, proud of his work, has used an inanimate object to be his mouthpiece. In a society where bragging is socially unacceptable, this method provides a relatively harmless means of expression of his feelings. Of course, it was not just one founder who was putting this type of sentiment on his bells, and it was not long before inter-foundry rivalries began to be expressed in this manner also.

⁶²Ingram, p. 24.

⁶³Tyack, p. 76

⁶⁴Lomax, p. 43.

Type 10. - Inter-foundry Rivalries

In towers containing more than one bell, it was not unusual to find them cast by different founders. Each founder, of course, considered his work to be the best and said so by putting words into the mouth of the bell, so to speak:

You Riddle and Cokey, come hither and see
Which is the best workman of all us three.
Thomas Bilbee cast me.

(18th century bell, Kilmersdon)⁶⁵

Often, after years of use or mishandling, a bell would be cracked and would need recasting. If this was done by a founder other than the original maker, it provided a prime opportunity for him to take a jibe at the first founder by expounding on the improvements that he had made in the recasting:

Bilbie and Boosh may come and see
What Evans and Nott have done to me.

(1758)⁶⁶

Badgworth ringers they were mad
Because Rigbie made me bad
But Abel Rudhall you may see
Hath made me better than Rigbie. 1742.

(Badgworth, Gloucestershire)⁶⁷

⁶⁵Ruth L. Tongue, Somerset Folklore, County Folklore, Vol. VIII, ed. K.M. Briggs (London: Folk-Lore Society, 1965), p. 20.

⁶⁶Ingram, p. 24.

⁶⁷Cockett, p. 64.

Much of this commercialism, with its self-advertising and inter-foundry rivalry, came as a direct result of the introduction of "change ringing" in the seventeenth century. Change ringing, in very simplistic terms, is the method of ringing a group of bells in every possible combination of their order. It is a secular rather than a religious activity employed for entertainment as much as for any communicative purpose. Normally the ringers begin by ringing a "round" or two, that is, sounding the bells one after the other in the regular scale order from treble to tenor. Following this the order is continually changed, without repetition and within the bounds of certain restrictions, until every permutation for a ring of that size, be it five, six, eight bells or more, has been used. This would constitute a complete peal, but when one considers that a ring of twelve bells allows 479,001,600 changes, one can see the complexity of the system. On an average, it is possible to ring twenty-four changes per minute making it feasible to complete a peal on twelve bells in just under thirty-eight years. Needless to say, only certain sections of a peal are employed at any one time for such a large number of bells. Technically speaking, anything less than 5,000 changes is not considered a peal, a group of changes below that number being referred to as a "touch."⁶⁸ The former requires seven or more bells,

⁶⁸For further information on Change Ringing see Ernest Morris, The History and Art of Change Ringing (London: Chapman & Hall, 1931).

and thus, when the system was introduced in the latter part of the seventeenth century, there was a large demand for bells, a new emphasis on their musical qualities, and a need for bells of different sizes with accurate tuning. The founders had a field day. Not only was there a tremendous increase in business, but now the towers contained several bells amongst which they could spread their inscriptions.

Type 11. - Allusion to Change Ringing

The musical qualities of bells had been apparent for a long time as had been the value of music itself.

Music is medicine to the mind.

(St. Michael's, Coventry)⁶⁹

so their use in numbers for the art of change ringing was really only a natural development. The inscriptions resulting from this innovation vary from simple allusions to the art in one verse

How has the chirping treble sounds so clear
While roaring Tom comes tumbling in the reare.

(1732)⁷⁰

to a complete explanation of the order and number of the bells in a tower:

1. I am she that leads the van,
Then follow me now if you can.

⁶⁹ Coleman, p. 79.

⁷⁰ Ingram, p. 20.

2. Then I speak next, I can you tell
So give me rope and ring me well.
3. Now I am third, as I suppose,
Mark well now time and fourth close.
4. As I am fourth, I will explain,
If you'll keep time you'll credit gain.
5. Now I am fifth, as I suppose,
Then ring me well, and tenor close.
6. This is to show for ages yet to come,
That by subscription we were cast and hung,
And Edward Lulham is his name,
That was the actor of the same.

(St. Mary's, Ticehurst)⁷¹

Not all the bells in a ring bore inscriptions related to change ringing, as in the preceding example, and in many instances it was restricted to three bells in the group:

Treble Musick is not worth a groat.
2nd But yet musick won't agree
Unless 'tis seconded by me.
Tenor Yet all is a confused noise
Without my last commanding voice.

(1710)⁷²

Treble When I begin our merry din
This band I lead, from discord free,
And for the fame of human name,
May every leader copy me.
5th Through grandsire and triples with
pleasure men range,
Till death calls the Bob,
and brings on the last change.

⁷¹Lomax, p. 44.

⁷²Ingram, p. 20.

Tenor Possessed of deep and sonorous tone,
 This belfry King sits on his throne;
 And when the merry bells go round,
 Adds to, and mellows every sound.
 So in a just and well-poised state
 Where all degrees possess just weight,
 One greater power, one greater tone,
 Is ceded to improve our own.⁷³

In the latter example we see the bell's self-esteem surfacing again, but not quite so blatantly as in the following one, which, however, redeems itself through its humour:

I am Koc of this Floc.

(Bradfield, Essex)⁷⁴

Although now involved in change ringing, the bells also continue with their original functions of calling people to worship and the like, discussed earlier. Sometimes we find this, and the presence of other bells in the tower alluded to in the inscriptions:

I to prayer the living do combine
 The dead shall hear a greater sound than mine.

(Cheltenham)⁷⁵

Benjamin Lomax in his book Bells and Bellringers, when referring to the above inscriptions, writes that

this last couplet rises to sublimity, if we imagine the "greater sound" to refer to the time when "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised," but the poet was quite innocent of such intentions and merely meant that the living were summoned by a small bell, and the largest was used to announce funerals.⁷⁶

⁷³Tyack, p. 78.

⁷⁴Walters, p. 15.

⁷⁵Lomax, p. 56.

⁷⁶Lomax, p. 56.

From this can be seen the importance of fully understanding the context of any communication system, not only the geographical, historical and socio-economic, but also that of performance.

As the popularity of change ringing increased, there developed a certain amount of competition between parishes for the greatest number of bells, the best rings, and the best ringers. As a result there was a great drive for subscriptions to raise money for the purchase of new bells or for the recasting of larger, older ones into smaller, new ones. This of course was good business for the founders, and we even find them covertly encouraging it in inscriptions such as:

Prosperity to those who love bells.

(1718).⁷⁷

Type 12. - Subscribers Acknowledged and Bells Recast

Having encouraged people to subscribe to this "worthy cause", the least the founder could do was thank them for their generosity afterwards, although he would be doing this as much on behalf of the parish as his own. Gratitude to subscribers was shown in a number of ways; by recognising them by name, or as a group

Robert Forman collected the money for
casting this bell,
Of well-disposed people as I do tell.

(Calne)⁷⁸

⁷⁷Coleman, p. 78.

⁷⁸Tyack, p. 75.

I by subscription that was raised,
Recasted was to celebrate God's praise.⁷⁹

by requesting God's blessing on them for their generosity

Kind heaven increase their bounteous store,
And bless their souls for evermore.

(Leominster)⁸⁰

by singing their praises with the bell's ring

At proper times my voice I'll raise
And sound to my subscribers' praise.⁸¹

and even by toasting their health:

Long life and prosperity, to our
worthy subscribers.

(St. Giles, Northampton)⁸²

A somewhat back-handed compliment is given to the subscribers on the bells in Glastonbury:

Treble Public subscriptions gave us birth
Now our dear tones shall join in mirth.

2nd Our tones would all have been much deeper
If contributions had been greater.⁸³

Though probably true, it is surprising to find a statement such as the latter on an item of supposed religious significance, and one wonders whether a disgruntled founder "sneaked" it into the bell tower, hung it and received his payment before anyone noticed.

⁷⁹Lomax, p. 44.

⁸⁰Lomax, p. 44.

⁸¹Tyack, p. 75.

⁸²Tyack, p. 75.

⁸³Ingram, p. 24.

Many older bells were melted down and recast to give more, though smaller bells, and this fact is commemorated in many inscriptions across the country:

F.V. Goodall all we did contrive
To cast three in five.

(Laneast, Cornwall, 1742)

Thomas Eyer and John Winslade did contrive
To cast from four bells this peal of five.

(Bentley, Hampshire)

Thomas Kettle and William Jones did contrive.
To make us six that were but five,

(Northfield, Worcester)⁸⁴

Making the decision to melt down older bells was not without its problems, and there must have been many a heated debate at parish meetings. One such is commemorated on a set of bells in Northfield, Worcestershire:

1. Though once but five we now are six,
2. And 'gainst our casting some did strive,
3. But when a day of meeting there was fixed,
4. Appeared nine 'gainst twenty-six.
5. It was William Kettle that did contrive
To make us six that were but five.⁸⁵

These inscriptions can provide fascinating insight into elements of local history and parish conflicts, which are often forgotten, or lost when parish records are destroyed. But, it is not just on the local level that we

⁸⁴ Tyack, p. 70.

⁸⁵ Lomax, p. 43.

find important events commemorated.

Type 13. - Historical Events Commemorated

The inscriptions on the bells in St. Helen's church in Worcester are in memory of the battles and achievements of the Duke of Marlborough,⁸⁶ and the following inscription is found on a bell in Ashover, in Derbyshire:

This old bell rung the downfall of
Buonapart, and broke, April, 1814.⁸⁷

It was, presumably, recast afterwards with the above inscription. A bell in Damerham, Wiltshire, states

I was cast in the yeere of Plague,
Warre, and Fire, 1666,⁸⁸

while of interest to the history of the development of bells themselves, was the inscription on the first hour bell at Westminster:

Cast in the twentieth year of the
reign of her Majesty Queen Victoria,
and in the year of Our Lord 1856, from
the design of Edmund Beckett Denison, Q.C.;
Sir Benjamin Hall Bart, Chief Commissioner
of Works.⁸⁹

It was from Sir Benjamin Hall Bart that this bell took its nickname of "Big Ben", and Edmund Beckett Denison was one of the first people to work out, mathematically, the relationship between the shape and weight of the bell and its

⁸⁶Cockett, p. 64.

⁸⁷Lomax, p. 45.

⁸⁸Tyack, p. 88.

⁸⁹Ingram, p. 153.

musical note, which led to great improvements in the tone quality and tuning of later bells. It was also thanks to Denison that the first bell was cracked. He was experimenting with clappers of different weights in an attempt to determine the relationship between clapper size and tone quality, and finally cracked the bell after using one which was much too heavy. The bell was taken down, broken up by having a twenty hundredweight iron ball dropped on it, and the pieces were sent to the Whitechapel foundry and melted down to make a second bell. The latter bears the following inscription:

This bell was cast by George Mears of Whitechapel for the clock of the House of Parliament, under the direction of Edmund Becket Denison Q.C. in the 21st year of the reign of Queen Victoria, in the year of Our Lord MDCCCLVIII.⁹⁰

Interestingly, the bell has retained its nickname, Big Ben, despite the fact that Sir Benjamin is not included in the second inscription.

Items of more general historical interest can also be found on the bells, and the illness and recovery of George III is alluded to on two bells in Eye in Suffolk, dated 1789

7th O God continue thy mercies to the King.

Tenor Let us rejoice, our King's restor'd.⁹¹
whilst the finally undisputed settlement of the throne of William and Mary is recorded on a bell in Stapleton in

⁹⁰Ingram, p. 154.

⁹¹Tyack, p. 88.

Gloucestershire:

Free from Rebellion
God Save the King. 1694.⁹²

The bells also record their own history, and that
of their churches:

The Bell of the Parish of
St. Mary-Le-Bow.
Rung for Curfew 1334, Destroyed by fire 1666.
Recast 1669. Recast 1738.
Hugh Evan Hopkins O.B.E. M.A. Rector
Edward George Hicklenton
Alen Frederick Charles Bennett, D.L. } Churchwardens.
John H.L. Trustram, M.B.E. M.A. Vestry Clerk.
Named Me
Bow.⁹³

We hang here to record
That the church was restored
in the year of Our Lord
1585.⁹⁴

Some of these inscriptions are so exact in their information that they leave nothing to the imagination. The one that follows, found in Glasgow Cathedral, must hold the record for one of the longest inscriptions in existence:

In the year of Grace 1583, Marcus Knox, a merchant in Glasgow, zealous for the interest of the Reformed Religion, caused me to be fabricated in Holland, for the use of his fellow citizens of Glasgow, and placed me with solemnity in the tower of their Cathedral. My function was announced by the impress on my bosom: ME AUDITO, VENIAS, DOCTRINAM SANCTAM. UT DISCAS, and I was taught to proclaim the hours of unheeded time. One hundred and ninety-five years had I sounded these awful warnings, when I was broken by the hands of inconsiderate and unskilful men. In the year 1790, I was cast into the furnace, refounded at London,

⁹²Tyact, p. 89.

⁹³Cockett, p. 33.

⁹⁴Ingram, p. 21.

and returned to my sacred vocation. Reader! thou
also shalt know a resurrection; may it be to
eternal life!

Thomas Mears fecit, London, 1790.⁹⁵

Type 14. - Miscellaneous

With any typology there are always items that do not seem to fit in to any of the designated categories, and in this respect church bell inscriptions are no different. A bell in Hornsey, Middlesex, dated 1774, bears the inscription:

Apollo listens and approves the song.⁹⁶

Whilst, in general, the inscriptions of this period were of a more profane nature than their earlier counterparts, it was unusual for them to revert to calling upon pagan gods. In this instance, Apollo, the god of music, poetry, prophecy and medicine, in Greek and Roman mythology, is appropriate for his musical associations, but somewhat inappropriate in his religious connections.

The following, distinctly profane inscription, found on a bell in Towcester, dated 1725, is the only one I have come across which makes reference to the installation of the bell in the tower:

Pull on brave boys, I'm metal to the back,
But will be hanged before I crack.⁹⁷

⁹⁵Coleman, pp. 79-80.

⁹⁶Walters, p. 17.

⁹⁷Tyack, p. 93.

This final inscription from a bell dated 1885 is a total mystery:

True hearts and sound Bottoms.⁹⁸

Church Bell Inscriptions in the
Newfoundland Context

Of the 156 bells personally located in Newfoundland, I managed to gain access to only 115. Of these, 21 had no markings whatsoever, four had decoration but no writing as such, two were marked with numbers--one a Canadian National Railway number, CNR 156C82, and the other a Newfoundland Railway number, 1005N.R.--and 88 bore inscriptions which ranged from a simple date, through the naming of clergymen and churchwardens, to lengthy liturgical quotations. Table 7 shows the denominational breakdown of inaccessible, marked and unmarked bells located personally, with the addition of a further 22 inscriptions gained from questionnaire returns and other written sources, giving me a final working total of 110.

Table 8 gives a typology of Newfoundland bell inscriptions showing the different types of information found on the bells, and the denominational frequency. By far the most prevalent type of inscription is that which names the founder, often giving the date of manufacture as well. The founder only is named on 23 bells, in combinations with the date on 32 bells, and with other information

⁹⁸Ingram, p. 21.

TABLE 7

DENOMINATIONAL BREAKDOWN OF INACCESSIBLE, MARKED AND UNMARKED BELLS LOCATED PERSONALLY, WITH THE ADDITION OF 22 INSCRIPTIONS FROM QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS AND OTHER WRITTEN SOURCES.

	Ang.	R.C.	U.C.	Mor.	Pres.	D.U.B.	N.C.P.
Bells personally located	59	39	40	0	2	7	9
Inaccessible	13	11	13	0	0	4	0
With no markings	2	2	13	0	0	1	3
Decoration	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
C.N.R. or N.R. numbers	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Inscriptions	43	24	12	0	2	2	5
From written sources	11	6	4	1	0	0	0
Total number of inscriptions	54	30	16	1	2	2	5
Working total = 110							

Ang. = Anglican; R.C. = Roman Catholic; U.C. = United Church; Mor. = Moravian
 Pres. = Presbyterian; D.U.B. = Denominationally unidentified bells;
 N.C.P. = Bells not on church property.

TABLE 8

TYPOLOGY OF NEWFOUNDLAND CHURCH BELL INSCRIPTIONS, WITH A DENOMINATIONAL BREAKDOWN.

N.B. This table is based on 110 inscriptions found in the province but since some contain several types of information, they may be cited more than once.

Type of Information	Ang.	R.C.	U.C.	Mor.	Pres.	D.U.B.	N.C.P.	Total
Scriptural & Liturgical	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	3
Dedication to a Saint	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Invocation to a Saint	0	9	0	0	0	0	1	10
Invocation to Jesus	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Founder only	10	2	6	0	0	2	3	23
Date only	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	3
Founder & date only	19	6	6	0	1	0	0	32
Bequeathed in own memory	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Living donor named	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	4
Donating group named	6	1	2	0	0	0	0	9
In memorium	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Speaking bell	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	4
Praise of God	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Loyalty to Queen	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Call to worship	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Fire bell	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Self-praising bell	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Historical events	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
Church/community named	12	13	2	0	1	0	0	28
Clergy/wardens named	6	10	1	0	0	0	1	18
Ships' bells	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
Use of Latin	2	12	0	0	1	0	1	16

on an additional 37 bells. In total, the founder is named on 92 of the 110 inscribed bells. The date only is given on three bells, it appears in combination with the founder's name on 32 bells, and with other information on an additional 43 bells. In total, 78 of the 110 inscribed bells are dated. Table 9 gives a breakdown of the bells bearing only the founder's name, and the number of bells per company located in the province.

TABLE 9

BREAKDOWN OF BELLS GIVING NAME AND LOCATION OF THE FOUNDER ONLY, AND THE NUMBER OF BELLS PER COMPANY LOCATED IN THE PROVINCE.

Name of Founder	No. of Bells
American Bell Foundry Co., Northville, Mich., U.S.A.	2
The Cincinnati Bell Foundry Co., Blymer Bells, Cincinnati, Ohio, U.S.A.	2
C.S. Bell Co., Hillsboro, Ohio, U.S.A.	11
The Goulds Mfg. Co., Seneca Falls, N.Y., U.S.A.	1
Meneely & Co., West Troy, N.Y., U.S.A.	4
Meneely Bell Co., Troy, N.Y., U.S.A.	1
Stoermer Bell & Brass Foundry, Kitchener, Ont., Canada.	2

As was seen in earlier discussions, the two Meneely companies and the Stoermer foundry have been very prolific in Newfoundland and it is the exception, rather than the

rule, for their bells to carry so little information. All the bells, located in the province, from the other companies bear just this information and, particularly with the C.S. Bell Co., it would seem to be the normal modus operandum. Not all of these founder's marks are on the bell itself, some being located on the yoke from which it hangs (Figure 25) and, technically speaking I suppose, should not be regarded as inscriptions. However, I prefer to keep them under this general umbrella since the yokes are also made at the foundries, and since these marks do supply needed information. The American Bell Foundry, The Cincinnati Bell Foundry, The C.S. Bell Foundry and the Goulds Mfg. Co. all put this information on the yoke, the usual style being

The C.S. Bell Co., 44 Hillsboro, O.,
the number in the midst of this being the size, that is, the diameter of the bell. It may also be written:

American Bell Foundry Co., No. 36 Northville,
Mich. U.S.A.

Once the information includes more than just the name of the company, it is always cast onto the bell and becomes a true inscription. These vary in design from the lines of writing curving around the bell's shoulder, waist or hip (Figure 26) to the more compacted form within a shield placed just below the shoulder (Figure 27), commonly found with the Stoermer Company.

Bells are expensive items to buy and it not common to find them paid for by any one person in Newfoundland.

Figure 25. Founder's mark located on the yoke of the bell, Sally's Cove.



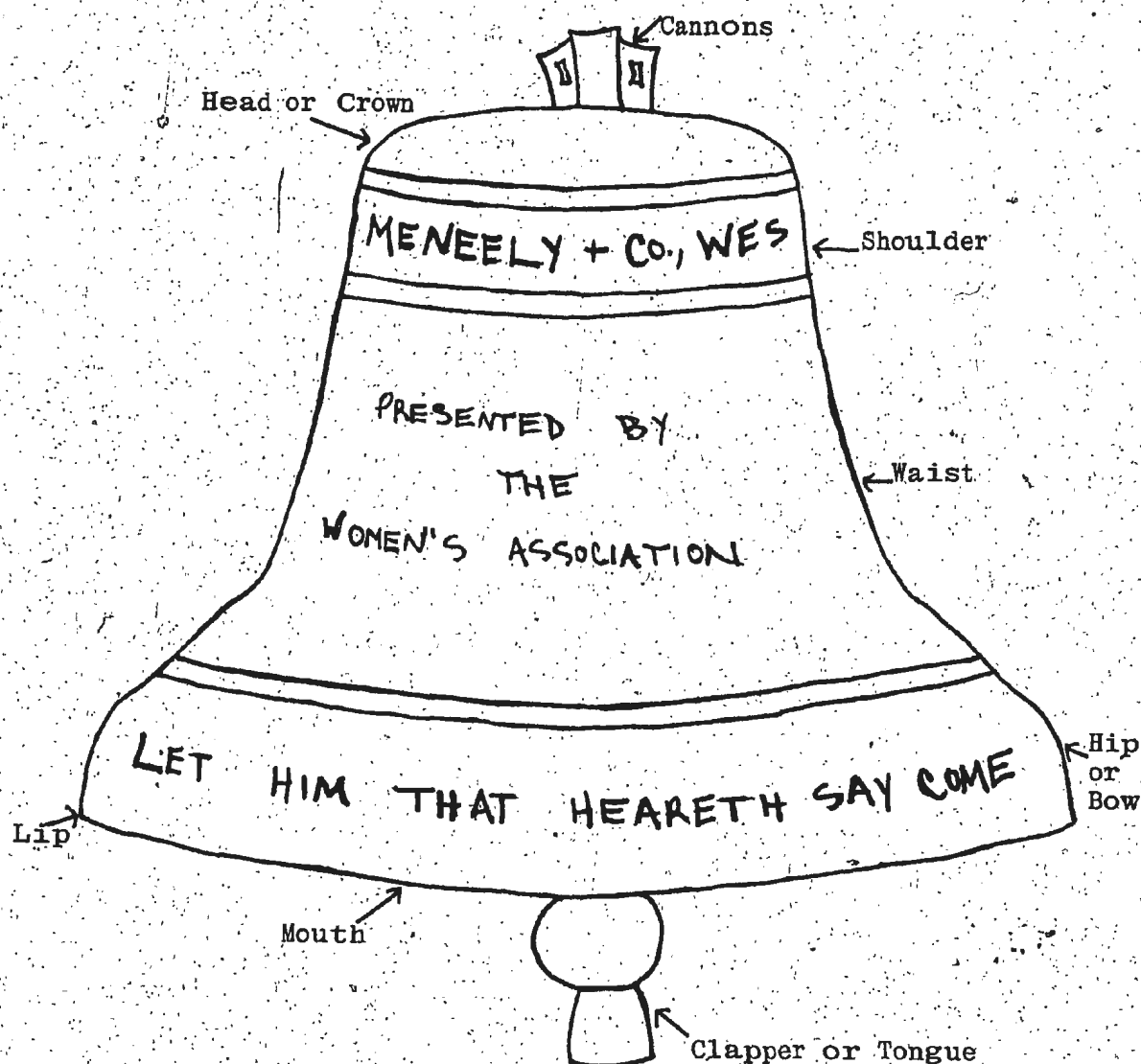
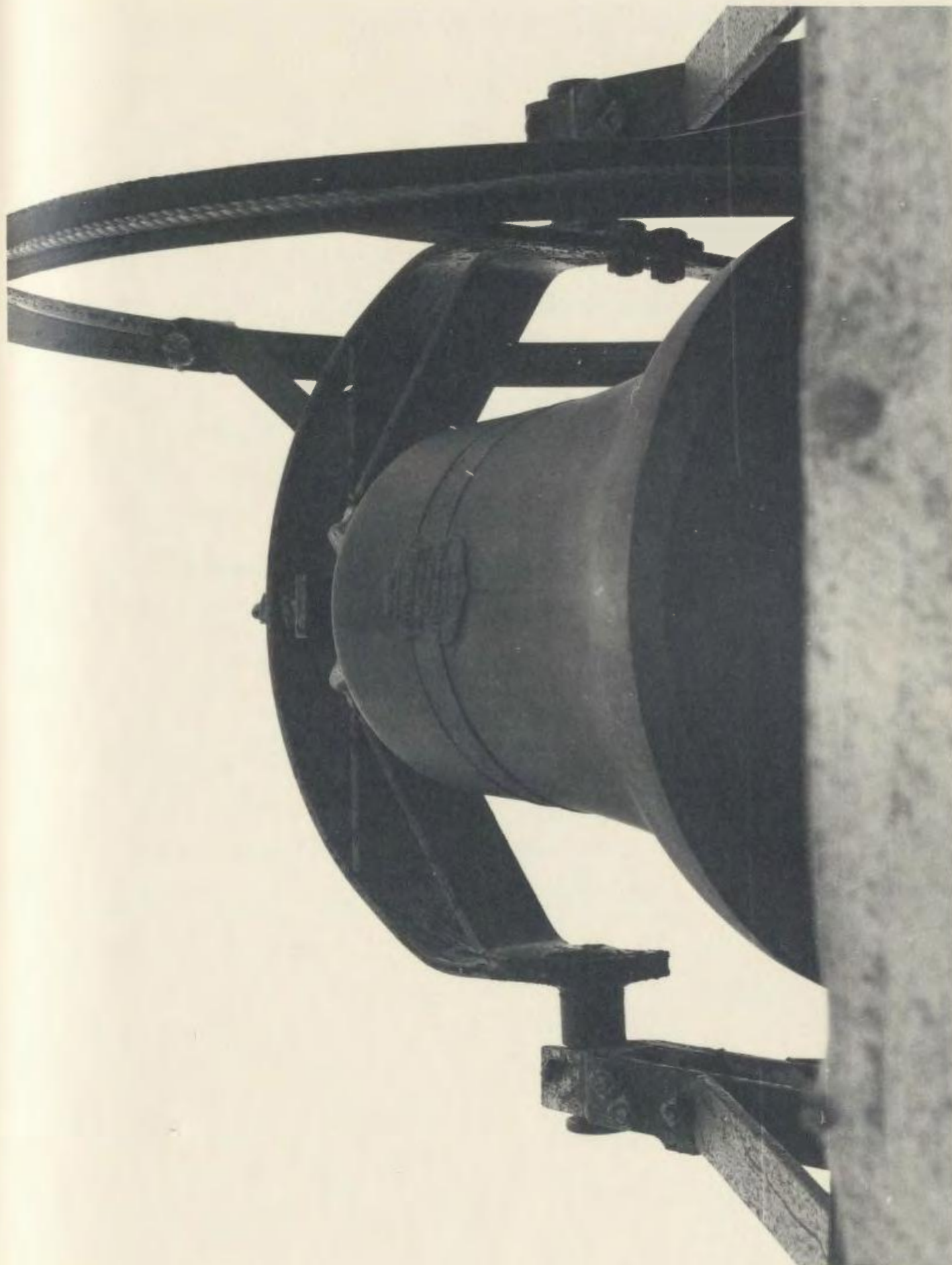


Figure 26. Bell showing named parts and examples of inscription positioning.

Figure 27. Compacted inscription enclosed in a shield, typical of the Stoermer Company, Bunyans Cove Anglican Church.



It is interesting to note that of the six I have located, only one was purchased in the nineteenth century, the rest being bought between 1901 and 1931 when the economy of the province was much more stable. The inscription on the nineteenth century bell from St. Mary's Anglican Church in Heart's Content reads

Presented to the Episcopal Church,
Heart's Content, by Walter Grieve. 1871.⁹⁹

the donor being a Presbyterian merchant in St. John's who later returned to Scotland, dying in Greenock in 1887. At this time, merchants such as Mr. Grieve were probably the only people in a financial position to purchase bells. On the bell in the R.C. Church in Summerville the inscription reads

Presented to St. Ann's Church,
Indian Arm, by D.A. Ryan Esq.
A.D. 1901,

and thirty years later, after having become a successful lawyer and politician, Mr. Ryan presented another bell which is located in Sts. Peter and Paul R.C. Church in King's Cove, the inscription reading:

Mathew O'Byrne, Bell Founder, Dublin.
A.M.D.G.
The Gift of Hon. Daniel A. Ryan. K.C.
S.G. M.L.C. 1931 St. Anthony.

The final example of a bell paid for by a living donor is found in St. Paul's Anglican Church in Harbour Grace, and

⁹⁹"North, South, East and West," The Newfoundland Churchman, 3, No. 10 (1961), 5.

has the following inscription:

Meneely & Co., New York, 1912
 St. Paul's Church, Harbour Grace;
 William Ward, Thomas Ross, Church Wardens;
 Presented by Mrs. R.D. McRae.¹⁰⁰

Two bells were presented to churches as posthumous
 donations as it were

Meneely Bell Co., Troy, N.Y. 1913.
 In Memory of Robert Kehoe
 By Whom it was Presented to
 All Hallows Church, North River. 1913.¹⁰¹

M.C. Shane Bell Foundry, Baltimore, M.D.
 Bequeathed to the Catholic Church of Trinity
 by the late Mrs. Priscilla Doherty. R.I.P.
 A.D. 1905.

and two bells were given in memory of other people. On the
 one at Holy Cross Anglican Church in Daniel's Harbour, cast
 in 1962, there is no mention of the donor

Holy Cross Bell
 In Memory of George Moss
 1879-1901. R.I.P.

but the other one, located in the United Church in St.
 Anthony, provides this information:

John Taylor & Co., Founders, Loughborough, 1958.
 Given in Memory of Sir Wilfred Grenfell
 by Sunday School Children in Scotland.

The name of Sir Wilfred Grenfell is very much tied to the
 history of Newfoundland, particularly in the area of the
 Northern Peninsula and the Labrador Coast. He came to the
 province initially as a doctor on a hospital ship sent to

¹⁰⁰ M.D., "St. Paul's Church, Harbour Grace," The
 Newfoundland Churchman, 3, No. 10 (1961), 5.

¹⁰¹ MUNFLA, Q80A-28; 3.

Labrador by the Board of Deep Sea Missions in 1892. Discovering, on his arrival, the deplorable living conditions, the lack of medical help, and the absence of secular and religious education, he determined to do something about it, and devoted the rest of his life to that task. He raised money for his scheme by making personal publicity tours in England, Canada and the United States, during which he would give talks on the conditions, physical, spiritual and meteorological, in the area, and then beg for donations to the cause. He was successful as a money raiser and managed to build not only a hospital in St. Anthony--he having named the town after his own patron Saint--but also schools, orphanages, industrial and craft shops, a dry dock, and dairy and pig farms, in addition to various nursing stations along the coast, all of which came under the Grenfell Mission. As a result of his travelling advertising campaign he gained international recognition, support and respect--a sample of which we see eighteen years after his death in the presentation of a bell in his memory, by the Sunday School children in Scotland.

It is much more common to find bells donated by groups in Newfoundland, the expense of a bell being a little too large for the individual pocket in most cases. Table 10 shows those donating groups represented in inscriptions, and although, via my research, I have located only nine, written records show that this was by far the most prevalent method of purchase and, interestingly, seems to have

been very much the domain of the women's groups, they raising money by teas, sales, bingo and the like.

TABLE 10

DONATING GROUPS REPRESENTED IN NEWFOUNDLAND
CHURCH BELL INSCRIPTIONS

Donating Group	Den.	Date	Community
Women's Association	Ang.	1907	Burgeo
Ladie's Sewing Class	Ang.	1911	New Harbour, T.B.
People of the Parish	R.C.	1912	St. John's, St. Patrick's Church.
Ladie's Aid	U.C.	1930	Hickman's Harbour
Women's Association	Ang.	1932	St. John's, Cathedral
C.E.W.A.	Ang.	1952	Seldom-Come-By
C.E.W.A.	Ang.	1954	Deep Bay
Sunday School Children of Scotland	U.C.	1958	St. Anthony
C.E.W.A.	Ang.	1966	Island Harbour

C.E.W.A. = Church of England Women's Association

The bell at St. Mathew's Church in Rockey Harbour was also bought in this manner although it bears no inscription to that effect. Mrs. Walter Shears, writing about the restoration of that bell in The Newfoundland Churchman, explains that

Money for the purchase of the bell was raised by the Bell Club, which was a group of girls under the leadership of Mrs. Elizabeth Parsons.¹⁰²

The bell in the old church at Sandy Point in Bay St. George, now resettled, was given by the Loyal Orangeman's

¹⁰² Mrs. Walter Shears, "Oldest Member Restores Church Bell," The Newfoundland Churchman, 24, No. 10 (1980), 13.

Association, and the bell in St. James' Anglican Church on Pool's Island was "purchased with money collected from individuals including crews of sailing vessels going to the seal fishery."¹⁰³

The manner in which this information is conveyed in an inscription varies from the simple statement

Presented
by
The C.E.W.A.
1954.

(Good Shepherd Anglican,
Deep Bay, Fogo Is.)

to the basic statement with the addition of a scriptural quotation

Presented by the
Women's Association.
Gloria in Excelsis Deo.

(St. John the Evangelist
Anglican, Burgeo)

or an invocation to a saint

St. Patrick
Presented to
St. Patrick's Church
by
The People of the Parish.
1912
St. Patrick
Pray for Us.

(St. Patrick's R.C.,
St. John's)

¹⁰³ Abner Kean, "St. James' Church, Pool's Island,"
The Newfoundland Churchman, 15, No. 4 (1973), 12.

and in some cases, the name of the clergyman incumbent at the time

Presented to
Hickman's Harbour United Church
by the Ladie's Aid
in the Year 1930
During the Pastorate of
the Rev. H. Russell.

'Let Him That Heareth Say Come.'

the latter including a line of scripture from the twenty-second chapter of the Book of Revelation.

The style of the inscription on the bell in the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in St. John's is that of the "talking bell" which was so frequently used in England:

The Women's Association
Gave me to the Cathedral
A.D. 1932.

Since this bell was cast by the English firm of Mears and Stainbank, now Whitechapel, this idiom is not so surprising.

The inclusion of the name of the clergyman and/or church warden in the inscription is quite common in Newfoundland and has been a popular style since the earliest of bells as can be seen from Table 11 which gives a chronological breakdown of this type of inscription.

TABLE 11

CHRONOLOGICAL BREAKDOWN OF INSCRIPTIONS NAMING CLERGYMEN
AND/OR CHURCH WARDENS ON NEWFOUNDLAND BELLS

Date	Person(s) Named	Den.	Community
1846	Minister and 2 wardens	Ang.	St. John's
1850	Priest and Coadj.	R.C.	St. John's, Basilica
1854	Priest	R.C.	St. John's, Basilica
1854	Priest	R.C.	St. John's, Basilica
1860	Priest	R.C.	Miller's Passage, moved to Harbour Breton
1896	Minister and 2 wardens	Ang.	Champneys
1900	Minister and 2 wardens	Ang.	Harbour Grace
1906	Minister and 2 wardens	Ang.	Trouty
1906	Archbishop Howley - on five bells	R.C.	St. John's, Basilica
1912	2 wardens	Ang.	Harbour Grace
1915	Minister	Ang.	St. Anthony
1919	Priest, bellringer and four helpers	R.C.	Tilting
1930	Minister	U.C.	Hickman's Harbour
1954	Bishop and priest	R.C.	Lourdes

Eight of the nine bells in the Basilica of St. John the Baptist include this "clergy naming" feature, five bearing the following inscription:

Mathew O'Byrne, Fountain Head Bell Foundry,
James's St., Dublin. 1906.
Howley Archbishop. Scti. Joan T.N.
S. Anthoni O.P.N. Michael Franciscus.

The invocation to a saint is very common on the bells found in the Roman Catholic churches; and is usually made to the patron saint of the church although, as in the above example, not always. By comparison, the inscription on the bell in St. Thomas' Anglican Church in St. John's runs:

C. & G. Mears Founders, London.
 The Reverend Charles Blackman.
 John Ellis } Church Wardens.
 Benjamin Green
 God Save Queen Victoria. 1846.

Since the reigning British monarch is the head of the Church of England, this note of loyalty on the Anglican bell would seem to be a logical substitution for the invocations to saints found on those of the Roman Catholic denomination.

Some 26 of the inscriptions make reference to when they were cast, and for what place, for example:

St. Aidan's Church
 Port Blandford, 1924.

St. Michael Blessed Sacrement Chapel
 U.S. Naval Station,
 Argentia, Nfld., A.D. 1960.¹⁰⁴
 Red Island, 1949.¹⁰⁵

St. Ronans, 1882.

The last three bells mentioned above are interesting, not so much for the style or content of their inscriptions, but because by these inscriptions we can trace their movements around the province. The Argentia bell is presently located in St. John the Apostle R.C. Church in Brent's Cove, White Bay, and Father Linus Coady, the parish priest, gives the following account of how it came to be there:

When operations phased out in Argentia, Father Bromley was informed that the bell was available.

¹⁰⁴MUNFLA, Q80A-23; 10.

¹⁰⁵MUNFLA, Q80A-26; 13.

He made a request for it and he acquired this beautiful bell. Job's fish truck (from La Scie) transported it from Argentinia to Brent's Cove.¹⁰⁶

The Red Island bell was moved to Southern Harbour, where it presently lies on the ground beside the church, when the island was resettled in the 1960s. It is scheduled for a further move to Long Harbour where it is hoped to be "hung and rung." The St. Ronan's bell is somewhat of a mystery. I found it lying in the basement of St. Patrick's Church Hall on Ramea Island, the church having been demolished to make room for a new one. Originally I thought that this must have been a bell resettled from another community which had had a church by the name of St. Ronan's. No one in the area seemed to know the history of the bell or where a church of that name might have been located, and I am now more inclined to think that it is an old ship's bell. The inscription on this bell is more typical of the style of lettering of ship's bells with large letters indented into it (Figure 28), as opposed to the small raised letters usually found on church bells (Figure 29).

To this "time and place" inscription, other sentiments might be added such as the dedication to God and the written call to worship found on the bell in St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church in Lance Cove on Bell Island:

This Bell was Erected in
St. Mary's Church,
Lance Cove, Bell Island
in 1917

To the Greater Glory of God.
"O Come Let us Worship."

Figure 28. Indented lettering typical of ship bell inscriptions, St. Patrick's Church hall basement, Ramea.



Figure 29. Raised lettering typical of church bell inscriptions, St. Patrick's R.C. Church, Tilting, Fogo Island.



Some inscriptions delve far more deeply into the history of their church, as with the one in the Anglican Church in Joe Batt's Arm

This bell is a duplicate of the bell purchased in 1894 which was destroyed when the church was burnt on Jan. 22nd. 1928.

whilst others give insight into the local history of the different areas. The bell in South Side United Church in Twillingate commemorates the centenary of Methodism in that area, 1831-1931, the fiftieth anniversary of the North Side Church, 1881-1931, and was also erected in memory of those church members who died in World War I. Its inscription reads simply:

Twillingate Circuit Memorial Bell.
Erected 1931.¹⁰⁷

The bell in St. Peter's Anglican Church in the same town has an inscription which reads

In Memory of the Great Haul, 1862,¹⁰⁸

and commemorates the good fortune of the people that year with an exceptionally prosperous seal hunt. In gratitude, people from all denominations pooled their resources, had the bell cast in England, and placed it in the tower of St. Peter's. From the last two examples can be seen the importance of contextual information: "In Memory of the

¹⁰⁷ MUNFLA, Q80A-53; 3.

¹⁰⁸ Edith M. Manuel, St. Peter's Anglican Church, Twillingate. 125yr. History 1845-1970 and in addition, Early History of the Church from 1813 (St. John's: Morgan-Print, 1970), p. 10.

"Great Haul" would lose a lot of its meaning if one was not aware of the existence and importance of the seal hunt in Newfoundland. The importance of the sea to the people of this province is expressed again on the bell in St. Mary's Anglican Church in St. Anthony

Jesus of Galilee Bless All Fisherfolk
M.C. Shane Bell Foundry Co.,
Rev. Gilbert P. Symons, 1915.

appears on one side of the bell, whilst on the other is:

We are as near Heaven on Sea as on Land.
Sir Humphrey Gilbert. A.D. 1583.

In my survey of British bell inscriptions I have found no examples of this type, which is surprising considering the number of fishing communities in that country. However, the above examples are in keeping with the British tradition in their expression of the values of their society.

The use of Latin is found on sixteen bells, predominantly in the Catholic Church which numbers twelve with an additional one not now on church property, but which was originally in the Catholic Church at Miller's Passage.

Two Anglican bells contain Latin in their inscriptions, as does one Presbyterian bell. Although the use of Latin more or less died out after the Reformation, because of the general distrust of the Church of Rome, it was revived by the Puseyites, who were attempting to link the Anglican Church more closely to the Roman Catholic Church in the nineteenth century. Since that time Latin has been used much more liberally. The following examples from Newfoundland are similar in their use of Latin, but totally

different in the content of their messages. The inscription below, from the R.C. Church in Torbay, contains part of the Gloria and another section of the liturgy, and is the longest inscription I have found to date:

With all our heart and with all our voice do we
acknowledge thee, praise thee and bless thee O
God the Father, O God the Son, the only begotten!
O God the Holy Ghost the unbegotten One Holy
and Undivided Trinity! To Thee be glory forever.

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth
Plena Est Omnia Terra Gloria Ejus. Deo Optimo
Maximo Trino et Uno. Hanc Campanum Parachus
Populusque Torsinus. D.D. MCMXV.

The inscription found on the bell in St. Andrew's
Presbyterian Church includes a line of Latin which might
be regarded as the "vocal bell's" call to worship

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church,
St. John's, Nfld.
Voco Venite in Dominus Tempium.
Founder, C. Millsun & Co., Glasgow, 1896.

the Latin, in approximate translation, reading "I Call you
to come in time to the Lord." The final example from the
bell at All Hallow's Anglican Church in Pouch Cove, is the
Latin version of the self-praising bell inscription so
commonly found in England.

Beatus Est Populus Qui Exaudit Clangorem.

Thus we can see that many aspects from the typology
of British bell inscriptions have been continued in Newfound-
land. Scriptural and liturgical quotations are found, as
are dedications and invocations to the saints. Founders
and donating groups are named, loyalty to the crown is
expressed, bells have voices of their own, on occasions a

little conceited, and people and important events are commemorated. One bell, not mentioned earlier, also outlines its function:

Manufactured by Meneely & Kimberly,
Troy, N.Y., for the Government of
Newfoundland, as a fire bell for
the town of St. John's, A.D. 1878.

This bell was bought for purely secular purposes, and has never been used for those of a religious nature. However, having been replaced in its original function by modern alarms and sirens, it has been acquired by St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church in St. John's and the plans are, when funds permit, to build a campanile so that it can be used.

The three major types of inscriptions prevalent in Britain and not found in Newfoundland are those concerned with inter-foundry rivalries, subscriptions for the recasting of old bells to obtain a greater number of bells for the tower, and those dealing with change ringing. These three categories are interrelated since the need for more bells, and the recasting of older ones, and the subsequent back-biting between the founders would probably not have arisen had change ringing not developed and become so popular. Change ringing is an aspect of the British bell tradition that never came over to Newfoundland. The expense of the bells could not be met by the poor parishes around the island, and the wooden bell towers are not strong enough to hold the five or more bells required for this

musical aspect of the tradition. Many a tower in Newfoundland has collapsed from the strain of holding just one bell. The tower of St. Mary the Virgin Church in Lance Cove, Bell Island, for example, had to be pulled down (Figures 30 and 31) after it had suffered considerable deterioration as a result of the local weather conditions and the strain of holding the bell. It has been replaced by a much smaller, and very sturdy belfry (Figure 32). This has been a perennial problem with the wooden structures found in the province, and Rev. Richard Thorne gives the following account from Twillingate:

It is said that one day the sexton went up the belfry to ring the old bell, and as he did, others observed the tower to sway to and fro with the movement of the bell. From that moment on people vowed to build a tower on the church lest the whole she-bang--sexton and all--go rolling down the hill! Probably Mr. Martin Young, the sexton, was some relieved.¹⁰⁹

Thus the environment and the economic situation has completely negated the change ringing aspect of the British tradition, but many others have continued, and Table 12 shows these Newfoundland inscription types related to the British typology.

From the preceding text it can be seen that there has been considerable change in the style and sentiment of church bell inscriptions from when they first appeared in England to the form they take today in Newfoundland.

¹⁰⁹ MUNFLA, Q80A-453; 10.

Figures 30 and 31. Demolition of deteriorated tower on St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church, Lance Cove, Bell Island. (Photographs by Mr. Esau Parsons)



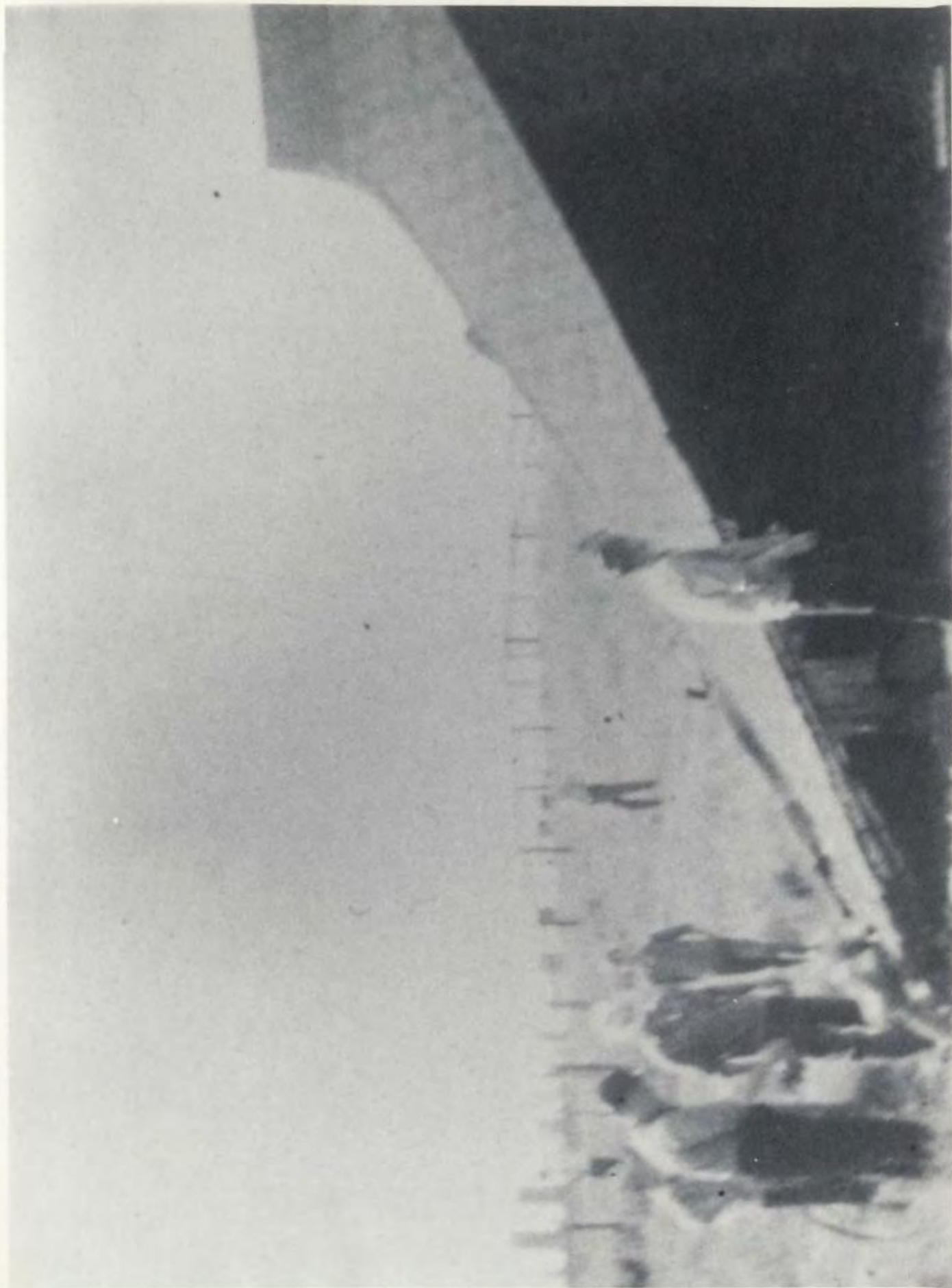


Figure 32: New belfry on St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church, Lance Cove, Bell Island.



TABLE 12

NEWFOUNDLAND INSCRIPTION TYPES RELATED TO THE
BRITISH TYPOLOGY

Britain	Newfoundland
1. Early markings.	1. Not applicable.
2. Scriptural and liturgical quotations.	2. Scriptural and liturgical quotations.
3. Dedication to a saint or the Madonna.	3. Dedication to a saint.
4. Invocation to a saint, the Holy Trinity, Jesus and God.	4. a) invocation to a saint. b) Invocation to Jesus.
5. Founder named.	5. a) Founder only. b) Date only. c) Founder and date only.
6. Donor named.	6. a) Bequeathed in own memory. b) Living donor named. c) Donating group named. d) In memorium.
7. Bells speak.	7. a) Speaking bell. b) Praise of God. c) Loyalty to Queen.
8. Bell outlines its function.	8. a) Call to worship. b) Fire bell.
9. Self-praising bell.	9. Self-praising bell.
10. Inter-foundry rivalries.	10. Not represented.
11. Allusion to change ringing.	11. Not represented.
12. Subscribers acknowledged and bells recast.	12. Not represented.
13. Historical events commemorated.	13. a) Historical events. b) Church and community named. c) Clergy/warden named.
14. Miscellaneous	14. Ships' bells.

There was a move away from the praise of God towards the recognition and commemoration of man; a move away from spiritual ideals towards material concerns; a move away from the fear of and preparation for the hereafter towards an interest in life in the here and now; and a move from "love thy neighbour" to "compete with thy neighbour"; all resultant on the changes that took place in society and, consequently in the attitude of man. Man's interests and values are evidenced in these embossed expressions, important occasions are commemorated, the epochs of his life and his daily routine are marked, and his changing belief systems are outlined. The tradition as it survives in Newfoundland has changed little from the form it took in Britain in the nineteenth century which is only to be expected since that is from where the first bells and ministers came. And, as with the British examples, those from Newfoundland reflect the concerns of the people and the structure of the society in which they are found. By far the greatest percentage of inscriptions are related to the historical aspect; naming the church for which the bell was cast and giving the date of casting, naming the clergy and the church wardens, naming the donor or donating group, naming a respected member of society or a loved one after death, and naming oneself after death. And, when no inscription is requested, the founder names himself and, in most cases, indicates his period of existence. Man's concern with his own existence, and the desire that it be

remembered in years to come, a prevailing feature of our society, is also the prevailing feature of the inscriptions, and, as true for Newfoundland as for Britain. Of the 110 examples from Newfoundland only 21 contain any kind of spiritual reference as compared with 110 which make reference, in one way or another, to man and his time on earth. Even when dates and founders are eliminated from the sample, 47 inscriptions are still found to relate to man's life as compared to the 21 pointing to the spiritual life.

Bell inscriptions make a fascinating study because they are in "print" form of considerable durability. They are also, in many ways, the product of a small segment of society, and they are items of restricted access to society in general, bells inevitably being hidden away in dark belfries of questionable accessibility. They are, therefore, in some respects, the lore of a small or "in group" and as such, and because of their material nature, fairly static and stable which would account for the continuance of the tradition for so many years, and on both sides of the Atlantic. At the same time, however, this group is still a member of society, sharing the way of life and the belief systems of that society and these it expresses in the bell inscriptions. The following extract from John Donne's Devotions XVII, an explanation of how any man is affected by the death of another, is equally applicable to

their shared belief systems, and also provides a fitting if somewhat presumptuous, conclusion to this chapter:

No man is an Iland, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine; if a Clod bee washed away by the Sea, Europe is the lesse, as well as if a Promontorie were, as well as if a Mannor of thy friends or of thine owne were; and mans death diminishes me, because i am involved in Mankinde; And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee.¹⁰

Individual bells can be tolled or rung, groups of bells can be pealed, chimed, or rung backwards, each ringing method having a particular meaning for the hearer. In the next chapter I will look at these ringing customs, how they relate to man's life, and how they have been adapted with the change of context from Great Britain to Newfoundland.

¹¹⁰ John Donne, "Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions XVII," in Complete Poetry and Selected Prose, ed., John Hayward (London: The Nonesuch Press, 1930), p. 538.

CHAPTER 4

"Who Bends Not His Ear to Any Bell,
Which Upon Any Occasion Rings?"¹

THE DEVELOPMENT, DIFFUSION AND DECLINE OF CHURCH BELL RINGING CUSTOMS IN AND BETWEEN THE BRITISH AND NEWFOUNDLAND CONTEXTS

¹John Donne, "Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions, XVII" in Complete Poetry and Selected Prose, ed. John Hayward (London: The Nonesuch Press, 1930), p. 538.

Bells have been used for social, ritual and magical purposes from time immemorial, and their use in religious ritual probably stems from their early role in magic. They were rung by the Chinese to summon rain, and by the Tyrolese to protect the harvest; even the bells attached to domestic animals had the additional function of affording them protection from the "Evil Eye", as is the case in Italy today.

However, in this chapter we will be concerned only with the larger variety of bell which is found hung in the tower of a church. Basically, this type of bell functions as a communication system, sending messages of one type or another which, inevitably, dictate its time of ringing and also the name given to it, as for example, the Fire Bell, the Sanctus Bell, and the Pudding Bell.

Although the church bell is, generally speaking, a consecrated religious item, it also performs secular functions, and some which are directly related to non-religious or "folk" belief.

There are various manners in which a bell can communicate other than by merely sounding. The speed of the ringing can be altered, normally slow for mourning and fast for rejoicing; different numbers and sequences of rings are used to proclaim different messages; and the reversal of a recognised sequence is used to announce some type of danger or trouble.

Already it can be seen that church bell ringing is a complex tradition, an intricate communication system, which, like any other communication system, requires the message to be encoded, transmitted, and decoded by the recipient in order that its function can be fulfilled and, where necessary, appropriate action taken. The aim of this chapter is to examine some of the major elements of this system as they existed, developed, and declined in Great Britain, with a view to establishing which elements did and did not diffuse to Newfoundland, while at the same time attempting to discover why this was so.

Table 13 shows a typology of the functions of church bells in the British context, divided on the basis of custom and belief, with a further division into sacred and secular categories. Although I have divided the tradition into four general parts, it should be remembered that each category is not totally independent of the others, and there may be occasions when overlapping of a custom and belief, or sacred and secular stimulus occurs. The Sacred Custom category includes those ringing traditions associated with the services and festivals of the church whilst those in the Sacred/Secular Belief category are based on a combination of both religious and folk belief. The early church incorporated many of the people's beliefs into its theology but latterly, with the new modes of thinking associated with the Reformation, beliefs which had been formerly and formally accepted by the church were rejected.

TABLE 13
TYPOLOGY OF BRITISH CHURCH BELL RINGING CUSTOMS

Sacred Custom:

- 1) Call to prayer and worship.
- 2) Announcement of different parts of the service.
- 3) A reminder of, and in celebration of, church festivals.
- 4) To mark rites of passage.

Sacred/Secular Belief:

- 1) Drive away thunder and lightning.
- 2) Drive away evil spirits from persons and places.
- 3) Expedite childbirth.
- 4) Protection of passing soul from demon possession.

Sacred/Secular Custom:

- 1) Mark important national events.
- 2) Mark important local events and festivals.
- 3) Warn of invasion.
- 4) Announce arrival of important visitors.

Secular Custom:

- 1) Announcements of political meetings and celebrations.
 - 2) Announcement of the beginning of trade; markets, fairs, etc.
 - 3) Announce beginning/winning of local sports.
 - 4) Announce commencement of parochial activities such as road mending.
 - 5) Mark secular rites of passage.
 - 6) Announce fire and accidents.
 - 7) Used as a directional guide.
 - 8) Announce time of day.
 - 9) Change Ringing.
-

These same beliefs were not so readily rejected by the people, and, as a result, once again became the possession of the folk. It is because of this movement of beliefs from the folk, to the church and the folk, and back to the folk, that I have grouped these traditions together under the heading of Sacred/Secular Belief. The third category of Sacred/Secular Custom includes those traditions associated with events of a more secular nature but which, because of the union between church and state, are also important in the religious setting. Church and state are, in many ways, dependent on each other, the welfare of one affecting that of the other. This category includes those traditions which are indicative of this symbiotic association. The final category, Secular Customs, is self-explanatory, but it should be borne in mind that as a result of the above-mentioned relationship between church and state, there may be overlapping between this and the previous category. Change ringing, for example, is employed as a call to worship and in celebration of church festivals, but is also used for entertainment purposes and can be regarded, in some respects, as a secular hobby. The bell might be rung to announce meetings of church committees as well as political ones, but generally speaking these traditions are of a more secular nature, even when within the religious context.

The discussion which follows will take the same order and outline established in the typology, and for each functional "type", the British tradition will be examined

first, and then, where applicable, that found in Newfoundland.

Ringings Traditions Associated with the
Customs of the Church

As seen from the typology, in this setting the church bell had four major functions: a call to worship and prayer; to call attention to the different parts of the church service, to announce church festivals; and to mark the epochs of man's life--the rites of passage recognised by the church.

The first three functions are very much inter-related, and developed from the early Monastic use when bells were rung at three-hourly intervals each day to call the monks to prayer, and to invite the local people to share in their worship services. In the British tradition the Angelus Bell, rung at 6:00 a.m., noon, and 6:00 p.m. to call the faithful to prayer to the Virgin Mary--initially as a plea for her to protect the Crusaders, and latterly to thank God for the blessings of the Redemption through Christ--was maintained for many centuries. However, after the Reformation, this bell became, in many areas, merely an indicator of the beginning and ending of the working day. The Matins Bell sometimes replaced the 6:00 a.m. Angelus, and indicated that there would be an early Mass, but latterly this bell was restricted to an 8:00 a.m. service on Sundays only. These bells were maintained only within the Roman Catholic denomination; the

post-Reformation Protestants never adopting them. Thus it is only amongst the Catholic people of Newfoundland that we find the tradition of the Angelus bell. It has been continued here for many years although it is now on the decline, and, where in existence at all, is only rung at noon.

In many parishes, particularly in rural England, one minister or priest was shared by several churches, and this fact, added to the difficulties of transport, meant that church services were not at the same time every week, if indeed they were conducted that frequently. In addition, few people in the early days possessed their own clocks and watches, and for this reason rural and urban people alike relied on church bells to inform them of the time of day and the time and type of church service. In many areas advance notice was given of an early Sunday mass by the ringing of the "Morrow Mass Bell" on Saturday nights, whilst in other areas the regular call to worship was rung on Sunday mornings. This was probably one of the most prevalent functions of the church bell, and another aspect of the tradition which disseminated to, and still survives in Newfoundland.

Not all church services included a sermon, and in many areas, if one was to be preached, the fact was announced by the ringing of the "Sermon Bell" which tolled either immediately following the peal announcing the service, or quite some time before it, depending more or less on local taste. Even during the service, bells were

employed to draw attention to the more important parts of the mass. The "Sanctus Bell" was rung at the Canon of the mass when the "Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus" was said, hence its name. This was intended to notify not only those present at the service, but also those not in church, that this solemn moment had been reached. The "Sacrings Bell", a much smaller hand bell, was rung at the time of the consecration of the host and became known as the "Elevation Bell" after the custom of elevating the host had become common in the church.

In many areas of Britain another bell was rung at the conclusion of the service. Originally this ringing was intended to signify that there would be another service in the afternoon, but latterly it became known as the "Pudding", "Potato" or "Tatie Bell" since wives at home preparing the Sunday dinner took it as a signal for putting the potatoes on to cook. In some areas, such as Gateshead, this became a totally secular tradition and it was rung daily at 11:45 a.m. as a signal to housewives to prepare dinner for their husbands returning from work.²

Of the traditions mentioned above, the Angelus bell and the Elevation bell have been maintained in the Catholic faith in Newfoundland, and ringing as a call to worship has been maintained by all the faiths which make use of bells as a means of communication.

²George S. Tyack, A Book About Bells (London, 1898; rpt. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Gryphon Books, 1971), p. 234.

The chief fasts and festivals of the Christian year have for centuries been marked by the ringing of church bells and the one which perhaps first comes to mind is that of Christmas. That this season has long been associated with the ringing of bells is evidenced by the numbers that are pictured on Christmas cards and wrapping paper, and used as house and tree decorations. In Britain the pealing of church bells is an important part of this festive season and usually begins on St. Thomas' Day when it is customary to "ring in Christmas." The ringing continues through Advent becoming more frequent and prolonged as Christmas Day approaches. An interesting custom practiced in some areas of England, which was not continued in Newfoundland, was the ringing of the "Devil's Knell", or "The Old Lad's Passing Bell", "Old Lad" being the nickname for the Devil. The tenor bell was tolled on Christmas Eve once for every year since Christ was born in Bethlehem, the ringing being timed to finish exactly at midnight when Christmas Day proper was ushered in with a joyful peal. Underlying this custom was the belief that when Christ was born Satan was defeated and died, hence the death knell. This ringing was also thought to protect the local people from the influences of the Devil throughout the coming year.³

³Christina Hole, English Traditional Customs (London: B.T. Batsford, 1975), p. 11.

The next festival commemorated by the ringing of bells was that of Childermas, or the Holy Innocents, when a muffled peal, that is a peal rung with the clappers wrapped in leather or cloth, was rung in memory of the martyrdom of the Babes of Bethlehem. In some areas, following the muffled ringing, an open peal was rung for the deliverance of the Infant Jesus. Ditchfield, in 1896, mentions this custom existing at that time in Woodchester in Gloucestershire, Norton, near Evesham, and Wells and Leigh in Somerset.⁴ However, it seems to have died out elsewhere, and was never practiced in Newfoundland.

At one time the feast of the Circumcision was marked by the ringing of church bells, but this was obscured when it was dictated that the civil year would begin on the same day. New Year's Day is commemorated by the bells, but is now a civil rather than a religious festival and will, therefore, be dealt with elsewhere.

Lent, or at least the approach thereof, was the next important Christian season marked by the bells. The day preceding Lent, known as Shrove Tuesday, or more commonly as Pancake Day, was originally the day when people went to church to confess and be "shriven" of their sins. It was also the last day that people were able to eat meat products and the like before the Lenten fast, and, subsequently, housewives tried to use the last of their eggs and lard.

⁴P.H. Ditchfield, Old English Customs (London: George Redway, 1896), p. 22.

on this day by making pancakes--the meat itself having been eaten the previous day, known as Collop Monday. As time went by, people became less interested in confessing their sins before Lent, less interested in fasting during it, but maintained their interest in the celebrations and Festivities beforehand. As a result Shrove Tuesday became primarily a secular festival, and the "Pancake Bell" which had once called the faithful to confession, now became a signal to housewives to start cooking the pancakes. It was also the signal for the teachers to close the schools for a half day's holiday prior to the pancake race, the local football game and other sporting events of the day, and the general gorging on pancakes.

This is another ringing custom not found in Newfoundland, possibly because its secular associations with outdoor sports and activities are not suited to this province, the climate not being too conducive to racing through the streets tossing pancakes in late February or early March. Bells are, however, rung on this day in some Newfoundland communities, notably those belonging to the Catholic faith, but as a call to worship rather than as an announcement of secular activities.

In pre-Reformation times the bells were silent from Maundy Thursday until Easter Morning. This tradition was continued in some areas, but in others it became traditional to toll the bells for the service on Good Friday, either by straight tolling or, commencing at 3:00 p.m., tolling

thirty-three times, thus representing the hour of Christ's death and his age. In other areas a muffled peal was rung at three in the afternoon.

We see vestiges of these traditions in Newfoundland whereby in many of the Roman Catholic churches the pre-Reformation custom of keeping the bells silenced on Good Friday is maintained, although ringing is continued on the other days in Holy Week. It is now traditional in the United Church and Anglican faiths to hold services on Good Friday here, and most always the bell is rung as a call to worship. However, in one instance, at the Anglican Church in Cartwright in Labrador, the bell is tolled on that day.

It was customary in Britain to usher in the other chief religious festivals, such as Ascension Day, Whitsun and Trinity Sunday, and often, too, the day set aside for the Patron Saint of the church. Again these customs have been continued only as a call to worship if and when services are held on these days in Newfoundland.

Thus we see that the customs of celebrating the festivals of the church calendar have declined considerably in the Newfoundland context and exist only as a call to worship if services are to be held. It is the church service that has become the tradition rather than the bell ringing.

Rites of passage, whereby people move from one group or state to another, can be of both a sacred and secular nature. Arnold van Gennep writes in his book The Rites of

Passage:

The life of an individual in any society is a series of passages from one age to another and from one occupation to another. . . . Transition from group to group and from one social situation to the next are looked on as implicit in the very fact of their existence, so that a man's life comes to be made up of a succession of stages with similar ends and beginnings: birth, social puberty, marriage, fatherhood, advancement to a higher class, occupational specialization, and death. For every one of these events, there are ceremonies whose essential purpose is to enable the individual to pass from one defined position to another which is equally well defined.⁵

Some of these rites of passage are of a totally secular nature whilst others are not only recognised, but also authorized by the church. Man's earliest sacred rite of passage is that of the baby's entrance into the church and acceptance into the family of Christ--the Christening. In many areas in Britain, right up to the present century, it was customary to ring the "Christening Peal" to announce that someone was being baptised and accepted into God's House. In the latter part of this century this custom seems to be on the decline, and in the Newfoundland setting exists only in the form of a call to worship since the christening ceremony is conducted during the regular service.

During a baptism the infant is accepted into the family of Christ on the strength of the promises made by his parents, to the effect that he will follow the example of Christ's life, and obey the rules of the Church. Later he must, if he wishes to maintain full membership in the

⁵ Arnold van Gennep, The Rites of Passage (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1960), pp. 2-3.

church, make these same promises on his own behalf. This is done at his Confirmation which again, in many areas of Britain, was accompanied by the ringing of church bells. This was a great occasion for bell ringing in Newfoundland also, but for slightly different reasons. Confirmations were always conducted by the Bishop and transportation, as difficult as it was, meant that many parishes considered themselves lucky if they saw him once a year. Thus, when he did manage a visit it was met with great excitement and celebration. The communities were often decked-out with bunting and ornamental arches in his honour, and, as a sign of respect, the church bell would be rung on his arrival. When he was ready to conduct the service the bell was rung again to announce the fact, and so, despite the occurrence of the confirmations, it would be incorrect to label this ringing as the "confirmation bell" since it functioned more to announce the arrival of a respected visitor, and the time of the church service.

The next rite of passage in man's life sanctioned by the Church is that of marriage, and again the time-held association with bells can be seen in the numbers used on wedding cards, paper, and cakes, and as decorations at the reception. This time of great rejoicing is, in Britain and Newfoundland alike, accompanied by the ringing of church bells. The inscription on a bell in Hogsthorpe in Lincolnshire explains the bell's function on this occasion:

When female virtue weds with manly worth
We catch the rapture, and we spread it forth.⁶

Here the bells, like the people, jubilantly raise their voices and proclaim the glad tidings to whomever is within hearing. This idea of the bells rejoicing is supported by many references to the ringing of church bells and the firing of shotguns at weddings, found in manuscripts on that topic in the MUNFLA collection. Jeanette Williams describing "A Typical Anglican Wedding at Isle Valen, Placentia Bay", writes:

After the service, as the groom escorted the bride out of the church, followed by the attendants and congregation, they were welcomed by the sounding of guns. Indeed this was the thing which was considered a 'must' at weddings. It was a way of showing the joyous mood of the people.

Mingling with the sounds of the guns was the rings from the church. Since there was no Sexton in the Anglican Church at Isle Valen, whoever made it to the bell first, rang it. Thus there was really very little rhythm to the sounds, but in the confusion no one really cared.⁷

Here we see a general picture of merriment and the church bell's function merely to add to the occasion, sharing in the rejoicing, and spreading the happy news further than man's voice was able. And this is how the custom is viewed today. There is a natural tendency to make a lot of noise when happy, and what better way than with bells and shotguns? However, I feel that in days gone by there was a deeper meaning to this custom of ringing and shooting at

⁶Tyack, p. 83.

⁷MUNFLA, Ms. 69-27, 51-2.

weddings, for the tradition of firing guns on this occasion, was also very prevalent in Britain until modern laws prohibited its continuance. Another bell inscription on the topic found in Rye Church in Sussex reads:

In wedlock bands, all ye who join
With hands your hearts unite,
So shall our tuneful tongues combine
To bless the nuptial rite.⁸

The salient part of this inscription is the "blessing" which is bestowed. It is an ancient belief that metal, and thus ringing metal, had the ability to ward off evil spirits, and since bells were also "blessed" or "baptised" by the church, they were seen to be endowed with extra powers as preservers against evil. Noise was also considered an effective repellent, and thus guns with their metal content and noise-making abilities were thought to be able to produce the same results. One can only speculate, but it seems probable that these ideas were originally held in mind at this critical stage of man's life, for although a joyful occasion, marriage was also a critical one in that the couple was now on the threshold of becoming an economic and productive unit in society which, particularly in older times, was essential to survival. Any threshold stage is surrounded by uncertainty and danger, and these dangers might well have been thought of as caused by evil spirits. It might seem logical then to attempt to protect the

⁸Tyack, p. 57.

susceptible newly-weds at this hazardous time by ringing church bells and firing shotguns to drive away malevolent influences. That a bell would be considered capable of bestowing a blessing on the bridal couple, as outlined in the inscription, would certainly seem to support this idea, although the powers were of both a religious, from the bell's christening, and from the metallic content and noise-making ability, a non-religious nature. It was probably for the former reason, and because such things were frowned upon by society in general, that in some areas in Newfoundland, thirty or forty years ago, it was customary not to ring the church bell if the bride was pregnant at the time of the marriage. This is an example of silence speaking as loudly as sound, for in a small Newfoundland outport everyone would be aware that a wedding was taking place, and if there was a tradition of ringing bells for the occasion their silence would send a message equally well.

The final rite of passage encountered by man is death, when he passes from life as we know it, to a suspected, but unknown life elsewhere, this being marked by the sound of the Passing Bell. The Passing Bell was traditionally rung in Britain when it was seen that the death of a sick person was imminent, and its purpose was to call for prayers for the safe passage of the soul and to keep evil spirits away from the body--lest it should be whisked away to return as a vampire at a later date. The soul, although of a spiritual nature, was thought to take a material form,

and, at the time of death, left the body and walked to the hereafter, invisible to the human eye. In preparation for this event, windows and doors were opened in order not to impede the soul's departure and bells were rung to drive evil spirits away from the vicinity of the corpse and the passing soul. Thus, this bell was also known as the "Soul Bell." Once the person had actually died it was the custom to ring the "Death Knell" which indicated not only the actual death, but often also the age and sex of the deceased. The manner of tolling the Death Knell varied from county to county, but the most common sequence was three groups of three rings for a man, known as the "nine tailors" or "tellers", and hence the expression "nine tailors to make a man", two groups of three rings for a woman, and one group of three rings for a child, followed by a stroke for each year of the age.

At King's Cliffe, Northamptonshire, a bell known as the "Winding Bell" used to be rung while the corpse was being placed in the shroud.⁹ The next bell to be sounded was that tolled on the day of the funeral, usually an hour or so before the time fixed for the funeral procession to leave the house of mourning. This bell was used as a signal to the bearers and friends of the deceased to prepare for the service, and was known as the "Invitation Peal" or "Company Bell."

⁹Tyack, p. 200.

The custom of tolling the bell at the funeral itself is very ancient, and the method of ringing these peals is described in the following way in Campanologia, or the Art of Ringing, written in 1753 by Grandison, the Bishop of Exeter:

It being customary not only in this city of London, upon the death of any person that is a member of any of the honourable societies of ringers therein, but likewise in most counties and towns in England (not only upon the death of a ringer, but likewise of any young man or woman), at the funeral of any such person to ring a peal: which peal ought to be different from those for mirth and recreation (as the musick at the funeral of any master of musick, or the ceremony at the funeral of any person belonging to military discipline), and may be performed two different ways: the one is by ringing the bells round at a set pull, thereby keeping them up so as to delay their striking, that there may be the distance of three notes at least (according to the true compass of ringing upon other occasions) between bell and bell; and having gone round one whole pull every bell (except the tenor), to set and stand, whilst the tenor rings one pull in the same compass as before; and this is to be whilst the person deceased is bringing to the ground; and after he is interred, to ring a short peal of round ringing, or changes, in true time and compass; and so conclude. The other way is called buffeting the bells, that is, by tying pieces of leather, old hat, or any other thing that is pretty thick, round the ball of the clapper of each bell, and then ringing them as before is shown, they make the most doleful and mournful sound; concluding with a short peal after the funeral is over (the clappers being clear as at other times); which way of buffeting is most practiced in this city of London.¹⁰

It is now almost universally customary to toll a bell as the funeral procession approaches the church, although Tyack in A Book About Bells points out that:

the use of more than one bell, and the ringing after the funeral, are both found only in scattered instances

¹⁰ As quoted in Tyack, pp. 200-201.

(1898). It is not unusual for the tolling to give way to chime just after the funeral comes to the churchyard . . . though in some instances the chime is only given in response to a special request, or as a mark of more than ordinary respect. Almost the same may be said of the peal after the funeral, except that it is becoming even more rare.¹¹

In some instances within the British tradition the "tellers", mentioned earlier, originally rung as a part of the Death Knell, were added to the funeral peal.

These ringing traditions surrounding a person's death, as were many other ringing customs, were severely affected by the Second World War, during which all church bells were silenced throughout the country such that when they were rung it would announce to the whole population that the British Isles had been invaded. After a six year period of silence, many of the older ringing traditions were never revived, and today it is rare to find the Passing Bell or Death Knell as such, although the funeral peal with some additions, such as the tellers, from the former bells, is still very common.

In Newfoundland, where a bell exists in a community, one of its major functions is to ring at funerals, basically as a sign of respect for the deceased, but also as a reminder of the sadness of the occasion, and an announcement that the funeral procession is on its way to the church. The method of ringing varies from community to community as indicated by the following accounts taken from the MUNFLA

¹¹Tyack, p. 202.

collection. Helen Tuff in her essay "Death and Burial Customs of Witless Bay" describes the custom in the following manner:

A man preceeded the funeral procession carrying a cross. He wore a white sash. A bell tolled continuously from the time the procession left the house until it reached the church, and again after it left the church until it arrived at the cemetery.¹²

The above is the most prevalent type of funeral ringing in Newfoundland, although on many occasions the bell is only rung when the casket is on its way to the church, and not whilst in transit to the graveyard. Lillian Simms writing on "Death and Burial Customs at Pass Island, Hermitage Bay, Newfoundland", explains that:

the church bell tolled about fifteen minutes before the church service began. Instead of the usual quick ringing, the bell was rung at a slow pace.¹³

This idea is much on the lines of the Invitation Bell found in Britain, and is also quite prevalent in Newfoundland.

An account by Carol Trimm of the tradition in New Chelsea shows a similar activity:

As the procession left the house, the church bell tolled in a certain way. It had a certain morbid dong and then silence, dong, then silence again. The bell was also rung in the usual way one-half hour before the service was to begin.¹⁴

This is suggestive of a combination of the Invitation Bell and the funeral toll. The morbid sound created by the bell,

¹²MUNFLA, Ms. 72-130; 35-6.

¹³MUNFLA, Ms. 75-197; 16.

¹⁴MUNFLA, Ms. 75-172; 14.

referred to above, should perhaps be mentioned here since it is obtained in a different manner to the method used in Britain. Proper tolling in Newfoundland is only obtained if the bell is equipped with two clappers (Figure 33). One, suspended inside the bell and used for normal ringing, hits the side of the bell, as the latter swings back and forth. The moment of contact between bell and clapper is very short, and the sound, therefore, resonates freely. The other clapper is attached to the base of the frame in which the bell is mounted, and is used only for tolling. With this system the bell remains stationary, and by pulling a rope attached to the clapper, the latter is raised until it strikes the bell. The moment of contact between bell and clapper is much longer in this instance, and, therefore, produces a much less resonant sound--Carol Trimm's "morbid dong." Sometimes the centre of the tolling clapper is made of wood, itself a non-resonant material, which would add to this effect. Figure 33 shows the bell in St. Boniface Anglican Church in Ramea, with the ringing clapper in the centre, and the tolling clapper to the left. Art Marsden who is the Minister's Warden at this church gave me the following explanation for the use of this tolling clapper:

It was used for funerals. Funerals, like when they used to start down the turn of the road with the casket. They used to toll that, see. Just bang, bang. But now we got to a point where we just ask the people in, er, whoever, you know, like when you go to a funeral, if they want the bell tolled or rung. Some people like it rung because it takes off

the strain of, er, you know, when its tolling it just brings the pressure on more like - sadness or something. It's right down morbid. [sic]¹⁵

Here we have another example of how traditions come to be altered; of how modern taste can create change.

In some of the patterns of funeral ringing in Newfoundland are also included remnants of the English Death Knell. The following example from an account of "Death, Wake and Burial Customs at Tilting, Fogo Island" by Laura Green is, perhaps, a vestige of the "nine tallors" denoting the death of a man:

When the funeral procession neared the church, the church bell was tolled nine times.¹⁶

Similarly, Catherine O'Brien, writing on the "Funeral Customs in Salvage, Bonavista Bay" states that:

Sometimes there was no church service, all prayers were said at the graveyard, but usually when a minister was present the official church service took place. The church bell tolled out the age of the dead person, and three more for his death.¹⁷

In Williamsport, White Bay, just the age is given out, as explained by Warrick Canning:

Then began the final stage of the journey to the cemetery. As the procession left the church, the sexton began to toll the church bell very slowly. One toll was made for every year that the old gentleman had lived - 85 yrs.¹⁸

¹⁵ Personal interview with Art Marsden, 16 August 1980.

¹⁶ MUNFLA, Ms. 72-107; 32.

¹⁷ MUNFLA, Ms. 67-14; 4.

¹⁸ MUNFLA, Ms. 69-5; 115.

Figure 33. Bell in St. Boniface Anglican Church, Ramea, showing the ringing clapper in the centre, and the tolling clapper on the left.



In an account of "Death and Burial Customs at Fogo" by Edmund Walbourne, we find vestiges of the "chime" which followed the tolling in many areas in Britain:

When the body is brought out of the house the church bell of that particular denomination begins to toll. It is kept tolling until the funeral procession reaches the church, then it is rung continuously. This practice is observed by all religious groups in the community.¹⁹

The ringing, as opposed to the tolling after the funeral, which Tyack mentioned as only existing in scattered instances in Britain in 1898, was also practiced in Merasheen, Placentia Bay, before that community was resettled in the 1960s. The following account is taken from an essay entitled "Roman Catholic Death Rites as Once Practiced in Merasheen, Placentia Bay", by William Cooper:

Once the coffin left the house the bell would start to knoll at about ten second intervals at the church. This stopped immediately upon the procession entering the church. . . . After mass and the blessing with holy water, the procession left the church and the bell started to knoll again.

The bell continued to knoll. The procession made its way to the graveyard or cemetery. . . . When the body had been buried into the ground and all prayers said, gravel was shovelled in. At this point the bell, which had continued to knoll, "had the hell rung out of her. By d' Jesus, she'd go hell-for-bent." This furious ringing of the bell lasted about five minutes, as the grave was filled. The funeral was now over.²⁰

In an account of "Death and Burial Customs, Pool's Island - 1900-1924", by Elizabeth Genge, we find what would seem to be the equivalent of the British Winding Bell:

¹⁹ MUNFLA, Ms. 71-129; 49.

²⁰ MUNFLA, Ms. 69-8; 102-3.

The church bell would start to ring at an arranged time, and the shroud would then be folded. One side was folded over, then the other, then the foot folded up, and then the top down over the face.²¹

In some places too, notably Conception Bay where it seems to have been quite a prevalent custom, the bell tolls for a few minutes to announce an actual death.

From these Newfoundland examples it can be seen that many of the older British traditions of bell ringing occasioned by death have been maintained, in one form or another, across the Atlantic. The fact that so many of these customs were continued in the New World, and that so many are still in use today is, perhaps, an indication of the importance of this particular rite of passage to man, and the impact that it has on community life in general.

Ringling Traditions Based on Sacred/Secular Belief

As mentioned in the previous section, the bell has long been considered to have powers over evil spirits which were held responsible for storms and upsets in the atmosphere and in the human body and mind. As a result, bells were employed to scatter winds, abate thunder and lightning, and to put the plague to flight. In his book English Folklore, Thyselton Dyer quotes Lord Bacon and Wynkin de Worde for the reasoning behind this use:

Lord Bacon, in his 'Natural History' (1635), refers to this olden superstition:- "It has anciently been reported, and is still received, that extreme applauses and shouting of people, assembled in

²¹ MUNFLA, Ms. 69-15, 30.

multitudes, has so rareified and broken the air, that birds flying over have fallen down, the air not being able to support them and it is believed by some, that great ringing of bells in populous cities hath charmed away thunder and also dissipated pestilent airs. All which may be also from the concussion of the air, and not from the sound." Wynkin de Worde tells us that bells were rung during thunderstorms, to the end that fiends and wicked spirits should be abashed, and flee and cease the moving of the tempest.²²

This belief in "wicked spirits", and the association of it with the church bell was very prevalent in the Medieval Church and Keith Thomas writing on the subject in Religion and the Decline of Magic states that:

Theologians further enhanced popular belief in the existence of the Church's magical powers by stressing the mystical powers available to the faithful as a means of preservation against the assault of evil spirits. They did not deny that devils could do material damage by bringing thunderstorms or by tormenting men and animals with occult diseases. But they drew attention to the counter-magic at the Church's disposal. If a cow was bewitched it should have holy water poured down its throat. If a man thought he saw a devil he should make the sign of the cross. If evil spirits brought storms then consecrated bells could be rung to repel them. And if the devil took possession of a human being the Church could ritually exorcise him. So long as certain physical misfortunes were explained in spiritual terms they could be countered with spiritual weapons; and here the church had the monopoly.²³

With the coming of the Reformation, the Protestants decried many of these "superstitions" and "beliefs" and they were banned from the non-Conformist churches, and attacked and ridiculed in the Roman Catholic Church.

²²T.F. Thiselton Dyer, English Folk-Lore (London: Hardwick & Bogue, 1878), pp. 263-64.

²³Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1971), p. 49.

But to return to the bells themselves, even after the Reformation in Britain, the belief in the powers of the bells was slow to decline among the people, and even once they were no longer considered efficacious in these functions, the underlying belief could still be seen in some of the sayings and omens held and believed by the general populace. The following are some examples from Britain:

If a bell rings of its own accord it presages death.

(Welsh Borders)²⁴

A bell appearing to have an unusually heavy sound portends death.

(Welsh Borders)²⁵

If the stroke of the Passing Bell is heavy, there will be another funeral within a week.

(Somerset)²⁶

Ringin in the ears was called the 'dead bell' and was a sign of a death in the near future.

(North East Scotland)²⁷

From this we can see that the bell was still looked upon as having certain special powers, especially in foretelling

²⁴ Jacqueline Simpson, The Folklore of the Welsh Borders (London: B.T. Batsford, 1976), p. 120.

²⁵ Simpson, p. 120.

²⁶ Ruth L. Tongue, Somerset Folklore, County Folklore Vol. VIII, ed. K.M. Briggs (London: Folk-Lore Society, 1965), p. 19.

²⁷ Rev. Walter Gregor, The Folklore of the North East of Scotland (London: Folk-Lore Society, 1881), p. 27.

death. This aspect is probably the most prevalent surviving belief surrounding bells as a few more examples will illustrate:

It is an ill omen if a bell rings for no apparent reason.²⁸

The unexpected tolling of a church-bell in the night is a sign of calamity or death.²⁹

If the tenor or tolling-bell of a chime 'hums' when rung, there will be use for it again for a death before the next Sunday.³⁰

If the passing-bell gives three short tolls at noon or midnight someone of distinction will die.³¹

Londoners think that if there is anything the matter with St. Paul's great bell, it is an omen of ill to the Royal Family.³²

Many of these beliefs still exist in Britain today as the following item, taken from the Sunday Express of February 10, 1980 illustrates:

Why did 10 p.m. curfew ring out at midnight?
IT WAS on the stroke of midnight in the small Scots fishing village of Crail. Not so much as even a footfall or even a miaow of a cat broke the silence

²⁸ Philippa Waring, ed., A Dictionary of Omens and Superstitions (London: Souvenir Press, 1978), p. 31.

²⁹ Cora Linn Daniels and C.M. Stevens, eds., Encyclopedia of Superstitions, Folklore and the Occult Sciences of the World (1903; rpt. Detroit: Gale Research, Book Tower, 1971), p. 1090.

³⁰ Daniels and Stevens, p. 1090.

³¹ Daniels and Stevens, p. 1090.

³² Daniels and Stevens, p. 1090.

of the narrow streets. Then suddenly the bell began to sound.

For some odd reason the curfew bell in the old tower in the market square, which normally is rung only once a day at 10 p.m., was ringing out again. Aglow.

Within minutes the village was aglow as bedroom lights were switched on by bleary-eyed locals.

It was the first time in the cast iron bell's 460-year history that it has been known to peal its sixty continuous chimes at the wrong hour.

For one and a half minutes they went on. Then just as suddenly, they stopped.

No sooner, it seemed, had the householders in the tiny village near St. Andrews got back to sleep when the three-quarter ton bell clanged out three times more at 1 a.m., 2 a.m. and 3 a.m.

In the morning an official of Fife regional council who own the bell tower, checked to see if some practical joker had been at work.

He is sole custodian of two keys needed to open two doors leading to the belfry. He found both doors firmly locked. No one could have reached the 80 ft. high bell to interfere with it.

So what had caused it to ring, and why?

The centuries old tradition of the nightly curfew was begun as a means of warning citizens to retire early to bed.

For nearly 500 years it was sounded by hand. Until Mr. Lawrence Nash, a retired electrician, perfected a device to ring the chimes automatically.

He had spent two years on the task and the bells were his pride and joy. For six years they worked perfectly, until that night. But stranger still, and unknown to most of the villagers, Mr. Nash, 90, who had been ailing with a heart condition for about a year, had taken a turn for the worse around the same time as the peals so mysteriously rang out.

Later that afternoon he died.

An expert who examined the bell's timing device claims that a freak mechanical failure caused a cam to slip allowing the clapper to operate hourly for four hours before righting itself.

But many people in the close knit community of 1,000 believe the bell's strange outburst could have been some sort of supernatural sign.

The Rev. Willie Macintyre, minister of the local kirk, said: I'm not prepared to talk in

terms of signs or portents, but I must admit the curfew going off when it did was a remarkable coincidence.³³

Similarly such beliefs are to be found in Newfoundland.

Virginia Dillon notes in an essay "My Methods and Problems in Collecting Folklore" that

if my brother remarks that there's a bell ringing in his ear she (Virginia's mother) might tell him 'Say a prayer for the souls in Purgatory'. This reminds me right away of the belief that a bell ringing in the ear means that a soul is going to Heaven. I don't know if my mother really believes in these old beliefs but there are some things that she does take seriously.³⁴

The following item was collected in Conception Bay by Gloria Kennedy in 1971:

To hear a bell in the right ear means good luck while a bell heard in the left ear means bad luck. Mr. Murphey informed me of this particular omen. Mr. Murphey says that a person hearing this ringing sound in his left ear should be very careful in his actions within the following days although this does not usually mean death.³⁵

From Seldom-Come-By on Fogo Island we have the following account collected by David Anthony:

If you hear a church bell ringing, someone in the family will die.

My mother . . . and my aunt both heard this one night, very distinctively. The bell they 'heard' had been tied down, the clammer removed [sic], and inoperable for a number of years. Replaced by a chime-stereo system in our church in Seldom-Come-By. Within the next week their brother-in-law had died in Sydney, N.S. Former resident of

³³ Bernard McGovern, "Why Did 10 P.M. Curfew Ring Out at Midnight?" The Sunday Express, 10 February 1980, n.p.

³⁴ MUNFLA, Ms. 64-1; 10-11.

³⁵ MUNFLA, Ms. 72-57; 32.

Seldom and W.W. I. veteran.

They later recalled hearing such a saying as young people, but had never experienced this particular one before.³⁶

It seems to be quite a common belief that a bell can sound on its own, that it can sound even when not functional, and in some cases when it is no longer in existence. The following story from Linda Vincent's essay "A Collection of Ghost Stories from Cape Island, Bonavista Bay, and Fogo Island", is an example of the latter:

There used to be an island off the Cape where there was a bell that used to guide ships in foggy weather. The bell was broken for a few days and one night a real thick fog came up. That night, a boat grounded on the reefs and was sunk off the island. Some lives were lost, but a few managed to swim to shore. The bell was never replaced, but a warning light was put on the island. There are reports that a bell can be heard ringing on the islands on foggy nights, but there is no bell there now. Many people who have heard the bell say that it is a warning to ships, since the boat was sunk there.³⁷

Bells are also believed to be able to announce wrongs as well as warnings, and below is a story on this subject which I was told whilst on the South Coast in August 1980. By request, pseudonyms have been substituted for real names:

A few years ago Linda got married to this man from the mainland. Now, he was a Protestant, and she was a Catholic so it wasn't looked too well upon. Anyway, they got married in the Catholic Church and everyone thought that he had turned to Catholic, and they went to live in Canada. They was down home one summer and he was out in

³⁶ MUNFLA, Survey Card 77-283.

³⁷ MUNFLA, Ms. 72-85; 8.

boat and fell over-board and drowned. Well, they put his body, thinking he was Catholic, in the Catholic Church, laid out like, until the steamer came again and he could be shipped home. The steamer came in late at night and as they, the men were carrying him down to the wharf, the bell in the Catholic Church started to ring. By itself. Not a soul in there. It turned out that he hadn't turned Catholic at all, and the people here say that the bell was ringing 'cause a protestant was laid out in a Catholic Church and it wasn't right.³⁸

By association of ideas it has come to be said that if a bell tolls during a wedding it is a sign of ill luck. The following account of "A Wedding at Leading Tickles, Notre Dame Bay", by Robert Elliot, illustrates this point:

As the married couple approached the rear of the church, confedie [sic] was thrown over them. . . . At the same time the confedie was being thrown, the church bell was ringing very rapidly. . . . I questioned people concerning the rapidity of the bell ringing, and was told that to toll the bell was a bad omen and thus the gentleman who rang it, as a precaution, would exaggerate the frequency of the ringing. Most of the people actually believed this superstition. A resident related a legend surrounding this. He said at one time the church had a new bell ringer; a wedding took place and this was the first time he had rung the bell. Since he was new at it, he rang it very slowly. The next day the newly wedded husband was lost at sea. The people from that day felt it was because of the toll of the bell.³⁹

The bell actually functioning as a protection against storms and evil spirits seems to have disappeared from the Newfoundland setting, although it may be that people just don't like to talk about such things. The closest I have come to the idea in Newfoundland is a friend

³⁸ Personal interview, anonymous by request, August 1980.

³⁹ MUNFLA, Ms. 72-39; 6.

living in Gander, originally from New Brunswick, whose mother, living in Moncton, has a bell which she rings for protection against storms. I visited Mrs. Richard in June 1980, and she gave me the following information:

Mrs. Richard: It came from my Grandmother and her name was Sylvia White and she used to live in Moncton. And it came, Father Mean went to Rome, and he brought twelve. So she was fortunate enough to get one, and I was fortunate enough to inherit that one.

Sheila: So how old do you think it is then?

Mrs. Richard: Well it's older than I am, and I'm 78, no, 79. It's over 80 years old. I was going to shine it, sometimes I do you know.

Sheila: Mmm. And when do you ring it?

Mrs. Richard: When it thunders, or when there's a storm.

Sheila: Any type of storm, not just thunderstorms eh?

Mrs. Richard: Yes. You should have it in Newfoundland when the water comes round the coast. (laughter)

Sheila: Yes we should for sure. And it protects you from getting hit by lightning?

Mrs. Richard: That's what they say. But I, I believe it. Because we have big showers around, big storms, and maybe next time it would hit the house.

Sheila: So like, while it's in this house it'll protect this house?

Mrs. Richard: It protects anyone. If you ring it for someone, it will protect them.

Sheila: So, if for example you rang it for Ron in Gander, it would protect him too.

Mrs. Richard: Yes, if I know there's a storm there, or, I ring it for my sisters, and my neice, and my cousin.

Sheila: And all your children?

Mrs. Richard: Yes, oh yes.

Sheila: And does it work?

Mrs. Richard: Well I've never been struck by lightning!⁴⁰

Newfoundlanders, to whom I have mentioned the above, did not seem to think it out of the ordinary for such a custom to be in practice, and I feel that further research in the province might unearth similar examples here.

As with the previous section, we find here a prevalence of bells, with their power of prediction, associated with death. This would seem to be a further expression of the impact felt upon the death of a member of the community, and the feelings of uncertainty, held by most people, about life after death.

Sacred/Secular Ringing Customs

As noted in the typology of ringing customs, the bells also function to mark important national and local events and festivals, and to announce the arrival of important visitors. This applies equally to Britain and Newfoundland, and is a sign of the union between the church, the people and the nation.

The ringing of bells in commemoration of national deliverance has existed for centuries, and in both Britain

⁴⁰Personal interview with Florence Richard, 10 June 1980.

and Newfoundland bells were rung to celebrate the end of World War II in our own century. Rev. Alex Smith, from Gander, was in St. John's at that time, and gave me the following account:

Oh yes, they all rang all over Newfoundland back in '45. In fact, there was an hour set when all the bells would ring all over the island. In St. John's they were ringing. It was a din of bells. I remember the Scots man down on the wharf. He let his emotions get the better of him, playing the bagpipes - he jumped over the wharf. They had to rescue him. I saw that myself. He was in a kilt too.⁴¹

Bells were also used to commemorate visits, anniversaries, births, assessions, coronations and deaths of Royalty. In 1953, the year of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, bells across the British Isles rang out to celebrate the occasion and reports that I have read in the Newfoundland newspapers for that year, point to the same thing happening here. I have not seen any reports, or heard of any instances in Newfoundland whereby the bells were rung for the death of King George VI in 1952, but they were in many plaes in England. Gerald Smerdon, presently the Educational Psychologist with the Terra Nova School Board in Gander, was an enthusiastic change-ringer for about thirty years in England prior to his emigrating to Canada, and he remembers ringing on that occasion:

Steadman is one of the most difficult things to ring as a peal. I've only ever rung one peal. That was the one I rang for George VI, the half muffled peal. That was in Steadman. I remember the George VI, the

⁴¹Personal interview with Rev. Alex Smith, 23 March 1980.

funeral one, because it was half muffled which was unusual.⁴²

Visits from Royalty, or, as we saw earlier, from high church officials were also accompanied by the ringing of bells, on these occasions a sign of respect and as a welcome in both Britain and Newfoundland. An aspect of the British tradition which does not seem to have spread to this province, however, is that of ringing in commemoration of important national and local events of the past. In Britain, November 5th is the day set aside to commemorate the discovery of Guy Fawkes' Gunpowder Plot, and was also commonly known as "Ringing Night" since it was ordered by Parliament that one of the celebrations on that day was to be the ringing of church bells. In many areas the custom of "Shooting the Guy" was observed, whereby the bells would be rung quickly, in order, down the scale, and then all clanged together, after an ordinary peal had been rung.

Another occasion in Britain when the bells were traditionally rung was for the Harvest Thanksgiving, a successful harvest being as important to the survival of the church as it was to the people. As with so many of the other ringing customs, in Newfoundland this latter one survived only as a call to worship on Thanksgiving Sunday.

That the bells function in this joint sacred-secular role is a result of the union between the church and the nation, each, in many ways, being supported by the other.

⁴² Personal interview with Gerald Smerdon, January 1980.

Happy events, deliverance from mutual enemies and the like, lead to a desire to thank God, and the bells appropriately peal out their praises.

Secular Ringing Customs

Although an item of some religious significance, the church bell has also performed many a secular function. In Britain this was more prevalent in the early days before the bells became numerous in the towers, and before they were installed in municipal buildings. Where a church tower contained several bells, one, often called the "Common Bell", was set aside for secular duties and was usually not considered ecclesiastical, but municipal property, the clergy simply being kind enough to give it "tower-room." These bells were rung to summon local parliaments to meetings, be they ward, guild, municipal or vestry councils, and often, too, they were rung to celebrate the election of a local member to the National Parliament. In Oakham, the seventh bell was used to give notice of town meetings and was, as a result, known as the "Meeting Bell".⁴³

Another secular function, one more directly related to the economy and trade of the community, was to announce the opening of the market, be it fish, corn, cattle or whatever. By this function, it being illegal to begin trade before the ringing of the bell, equal opportunity was guaranteed all merchants and buyers. This bell, often referred

⁴³ Tyack, p. 248.

to as the "Market Bell" had a counterpart in Sleaford known as the "Butter Bell." Local inhabitants were granted the opportunity of buying their butter before anyone else was served, and this bell, which rang to announce the opening of the market, gained its name for that reason.⁴⁴

Fairs were also announced by the ringing of bells, and connected with this occasion was the "Thief" or "River Bell." M.A. Denham in The Denham Tracts explains that this was

the proverbial name given to the tolling of the great bell of the church of St. Nicholas, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. From time immemorial this bell has been rung at 8 o'clock in the evening preceeding every fair as a kind of invitation or proclamation that all manner of whores, thieves, dice-players, and all other manner of unthrifty folks be welcome to enter the good town, whether they come early or late. The 'privileged fairs' granted protection to this class only so far as they should not be then and there apprehended for any theft or misdemeanor, save and except the crime was committed at or during the fair. This protection caused multitudes of loose persons of both sexes to resort to fairs of this description, who otherwise durst not have appeared in public.⁴⁵

Tyack, on the other hand, states that this bell rang "every evening during the fair as a warning to all thieves to leave the town under pain of arrest."⁴⁶ These opposing accounts serve to show that not only did the bell

⁴⁴Tyack, p. 251.

⁴⁵Michael Aislabie Denham, The Denham Tracts, ed. Dr. James Hardy, Vol. I (London: Folk-Lore Society, 1846), p. 303.

⁴⁶Tyack, p. 247.

function in connection with fairs, but also that the purpose for their ringing was directed by local taste and varied between communities.

Following these fairs and markets it was not uncommon for a town to ring its church bell to help guide the farmers and other participants home across the dark and indistinct moorland, thus serving as a directional guide.

The beginning of sports and other festivities was also frequently announced by the bell, and in days gone by, when cock-fighting was a popular sport, it was not unusual to find the bell ringing to celebrate the victory of a local cock in an inter-village fight. It rang similarly for the meeting of the hounds for the fox hunt, and for the triumphs of the race course.

It was also used to announce the beginning of parochial activities such as the renting of meadows to the poor of the parish, the renting of the grass on the sides of the church lane for grazing, the mending of roads, to which activity farmers were expected to contribute animal and manual labour, and the collection of rents and dues.

Another secular duty of the bell was to call the people to work and rest, as was seen in the first section with the curfew bell. In agricultural areas many of these bells were given names from the jobs to which they were calling the people. Thus, the "Seed-Sewing Bell" was rung at daybreak during seeding time, the "Harvest Bell" at five in the morning and seven or eight in the evening during the

harvest, and the "Gleaning Bell" was rung following the harvest, at 8:00 a.m., to give notice to the people that they were now free to collect from the fields anything that had been left behind by the harvesters.

Bells were also used to announce accidents and fire, when it would be expected that any able-bodied member of the community would come to help, and in which instances the bells were either jangled or rung in reverse sequence, or, where there was only one bell, tolled.

It was also the custom in some areas to ring for secular rites of passage, as in Hendon near Hull where the Pancake bell was customarily rung by apprentices whose indentures would be over before the following Shrove Tuesday.⁴⁷ Tyack outlines another of these secular rites of passage which he found in the Gentleman's Magazine of 1790:

At Kidderminster is a singular custom. On the election of a bailiff the inhabitants assemble in the principal streets to throw cabbage-stalks at each other. The town-house bell gives signal for the affray. This is called the lawless hour.⁴⁸

In his essay on the "Background of Harbour Grace", William Kennedy describes a rite of passage in Newfoundland, in this instance the initiation of altar boys:

Another part of the initiation was to send a new fellow up to ring the bell, telling him you'd be right up, as soon as you'd checked on something or other. The bell tower is dark and morbid, and cold, and can be reached only by walking to the

⁴⁷ A.R. Wright, Moveable Festivals, Vol. I of British Calendar Customs, England (London: Folk-Lore Society, 1936), p. 14.

⁴⁸ Tyack, p. 249.

rear of the church, up the stairs to, and across the choir gallery. This whole business is eery enough to a twelve or thirteen year old, especially with only a couple of lights on in the whole church. However, that's not the punchline. When the lights are on in the choir gallery, they throw a dim radiance or glow into the bell tower beyond, and the shadow of the long rope, hanging from the bell, is thrown against the grey concrete well. Therefore, someone would go up to the tower beforehand, tie a noose in the rope and set it swinging. Then he would close the door and come out and hide somewhere in the choir. When the new chap would come gingerly across the gallery, to the tower door, he would find it hard to open, (it always stuck a bit) so he would put his shoulder against it, give it a hearty push and go tripping in to meet the shadow of the swinging noose. . . Reactions varied, but were always interesting.⁴⁹

The calendric year was also looked upon as going through various stages and as having its own rites of passage. It was considered that evil spirits were abroad and especially powerful at these times, and, as a result, the protecting power of the bell was engaged yet again. All Hallow's Eve and Midsummer were thought to be especially dangerous times as, to a degree, was New Year's Eve. . . On the former two occasions it was customary in many parts of Britain to ring church bells throughout the night to drive away these evil elements. However, Henry VIII, who found it disturbing and annoying, declared that it was "superstitious nonsense" and decreed its abolition. Decree or no decree, it was only slowly given up by the people.

New Year's Eve is enacted more like a funeral in many areas of Britain. The old year is thought of as dying,

⁴⁹MUNFLA, Ms. 66-9; 22.

and the bells are often rung muffled until midnight, after which they are unmuffled and sound out clearly to announce the arrival of the new year, with its happy prospects and promises. In the industrial regions, it is not uncommon to find the bells accompanied by the work's "bull" or siren, and in coastal regions the ship's horns were commonly added to the racket, in a similar manner to the noise-making found at the rejoicing of weddings. This is perhaps again indicative of the feelings of insecurity felt at any period of transition and the attempt to provide protection at this critical time as well as for the future.

This calendric rite of passage is also celebrated in Newfoundland, and bells have added their tones to the occasion ever since they were introduced to the province in the first part of the nineteenth century. Ronald Noseworthy presents a comparison of the early customs with those of 1966 in his essay "Holidays and Special Days Observed by the people of Grand Bank, Newfoundland, as they are Observed Today and also Several Years Ago":

Even today there are still many people who observe this custom at midnight on New Year's Eve and at least a dozen guns, mostly shotguns, can be heard at this time, accompanied by a cacophony of bell ringing from the two churches here, the United Church and the Anglican Church, which use the bells to call their people to worship.

At New Year's Eve I usually stay home, inviting several friends in for a few games and a lunch just before midnight. At midnight, accompanied by the bells and guns, we bellow 'Happy New Year!'. . . .

As my father observed it.

The church bell would continue to ring and every vessel in the harbour would fire their small

powder canons. Fog horns would blow and men all over town would fire shot after shot from old muzzle loaders, or any other type of guns they had.⁵⁰

Based on the belief that the noise would scare away evil spirits abroad on this occasion, though now long since forgotten, the general rule in Newfoundland today is to make as much noise as possible to announce the arrival of the New Year, as explained by Dawn Cox in "Calendar Customs from Channel Port-aux-Basques".

At midnight everyone makes as much noise as possible. The church bells ring, all the boats blow their whistles, the fire siren goes off, the R.C.M.P. sound their sirens in their cars, men shoot off rifles, people at parties blow toy whistles, and at home we kids banged on pots and pans.⁵¹

In the following example from British Harbour, Trinity Bay, we find an example of the Death Knell for the old year:

New Year's Eve, five minutes before the stroke of midnight they would ring the bell. Then about one minute before midnight they would toll the bell. Then when the new year was here they would ring the bell again.⁵²

Often on this occasion the bell was rung by the sexton, but in some areas it seems to have been looked upon as a special privilege as the following two accounts reveal:

Someone from the Anglican part was picked to go to the church at twelve o'clock to ring the old year out from one minute before twelve to midnight and

⁵⁰ MUNFLA, Ms. 66-13; 3-4.

⁵¹ MUNFLA, Ms. 69-10; 82.

⁵² MUNFLA, Ms. 75-130; 14.

ring the new year in after. (Approx. 1926-1940. St. Joseph's, Placentia Bay.)⁵³

At twelve o'clock, whoever had been chosen would ring the church bell, while guns were fired by others to welcome in the New Year. (Canada Harbour, White Bay.)⁵⁴

In other areas it seems to have been the prerogative of the younger folk, and they were given license to "ring like mad".

On New Year's Eve three or four young men will go to the church at midnight and they will 'ring the old year out and the new year in'. This is done by the ringing of the church bells, which starts a few minutes before midnight and ends a few minutes past midnight. (Boxey Harbour.)⁵⁵

Home there are two communities just three miles apart, Aspen Cove and Ladle Cove. On New Year's Eve in one community they will have a church service one year and in the other place the next year. Both churches will ring the bell at midnight. It is always a gang of young people who ring the bells.⁵⁶

In Little Catalina the occasion is added to by having a mystery bell ringer:

Today it is marked with house parties and organized dances. An occasional year a Watchnight service is still held. Only the late middle age, the old and the very young attend. Even if there is not Watchnight service, someone usually goes into the church and rings the bell. The big question the next day is 'Who rang the bell last night?'⁵⁷

The concept of "ringing the old year out and the new year in" is so universally accepted in Newfoundland that the

⁵³ MUNFLA, Ms. 68-2; 126.

⁵⁴ MUNFLA, Ms. 73-60; 40.

⁵⁵ MUNFLA, Ms. 76-199; 21.

⁵⁶ MUNFLA, Ms. 71-66; 10.

⁵⁷ MUNFLA, Ms. 71-37; 75-6.

activity is still alluded to with this type of expression even in communities where bells do not exist or are not used for that purpose:

New Year was also a night for visitors and house gathering and a gun shot would ring out the old year and ring in the new. (Cow Head.)⁵⁸

At twelve o'clock the band plays 'Auld Lang Sine' and you can hear the sound of guns ringing in the New Year. (Buchans.)⁵⁹

Modernisation affects these traditions in Newfoundland as it does in Britain, and the British industrial siren finds its equivalent in Corner Brook:

Come twelve o'clock everybody is together in our living room waiting for the whistle to sound at the Bowater Paper Mill, indicating New Year's Day.⁶⁰

In some areas the older traditions give way totally to those of the modern age, as we find in Barr'd Islands on Fogo Island:

The United Church congregation had a Midnight Watch Service, and I suppose most of their members attended. At the stroke of midnight the bells from both churches rang out and men, using powder guns welcomed in the New Year. . . .

The United Church still conducts its Midnight Watch Service, with diminishing attendance. But the bells and guns welcoming in the New Year are not heard anymore. Now "everyone and his grandmother" are whooping it up at the local motel.⁶¹

Some of the most important secular ringing customs found in Newfoundland are those associated with accidents

⁵⁸ MUNFLA, Ms. 79-675; 11.

⁵⁹ MUNFLA, Ms. 80-220; 10.

⁶⁰ MUNFLA, Ms. 76-235; 19-20.

⁶¹ MUNFLA, Ms. 73-57; 30 & 37.

and fire, and people lost in a sea-fog, the woods or on the ice. In the former case the bell was rung to announce the calamity and to request help from community members. Although a dying tradition since the advent of telecommunications and modern fire sirens, one can still find this custom continued in the province, as was mentioned earlier in regards to Fogo Island.

Another vital function was the ringing when someone was lost at sea in a fog, in the woods or on the ice, three of the major hazards encountered by Newfoundlanders in their daily toil. Barbara Fowler, from St. Phillips, told me the following story which she heard from her local Anglican minister in 1979:

He was telling us about, like these people got lost out in a boat right. And so, in order to get them back, what they did was they rang the bell all day. And that's how the people, the people in the boat could get home. 'Cause they heard the bell. And because it was so foggy, this is how they got home, they heard the bell.⁶²

Thus the bell was used as a direction indicator and people were able to guide themselves home by its sound. This function was widespread in Newfoundland, although the local geographic setting influenced the efficacy of the bell in this role as I discovered when travelling on the South Coast in the summer of 1980. That area of the province has a highly indented coastline, many communities being located at the inner ends of three or four mile long fjords. The men fish, not in the fjords, but out in the open sea, a

⁶²Personal interview with Barbara Fowler, 24 July 1980.

distance sufficiently far from the community that the bell would not be heard. Within the fjord itself, I was assured, it is "no problem" to navigate the way home, guided by the steep sided cliffs. In this situation, therefore, the bell is totally redundant as a directional guide.

Apart from the above use however, if people were lost on land, the bell also served to call together a search party. The church would then become the centre of operations to which groups would return periodically to give progress reports. Once the missing person has been found the bell was usually rung at a faster pace to announce the fact. The bell in the United Church in Musgravetown was employed in this manner, as recently as 1977, when a small child was lost.

Even today with our modern communication systems, these functions of announcing a calamity or ringing for help, are still very much in the minds of the people, as I discovered on many occasions whilst doing field research. I usually ask the sexton or church warden to ring the bell and, apart from situations like we saw in Fogo where they cannot, they are usually very obliging. However, on many occasions this "out of regular time ringing" has brought people rushing to the church to find out what is "wrong", and on one or two occasions, to find out who was "fooling around" with the bell. The question relating to this topic, included on the questionnaire which I distributed to the clergy of the province, elicited the same type of response

as I had personally encountered in the field. Eight respondents said that the bell ringing outside of the regular times would mean some kind of trouble, six intimated that it would mean someone was playing a prank, two thought it a combination of the two, one that it would mean that the bell was being repaired, and one that it would be as a result of "some visitors asking to have it rung."⁶³ The latter response from Torbay may have come as a result of my having done just that in that community the previous month.

Despite its decline in use in recent years, the bell is still looked upon with respect, and as a communication system with special connotations. The question asked in the title of this chapter, "Who bends not his ear to any bell, which upon any occasion rings?" is as true for twentieth century Newfoundland as it was for seventeenth century Britain when John Donne first made the statement, and the occasion for ringing, if not immediately recognised, is inevitably investigated, though with varying results as shown in the following account from Renews:

One day at an unusual hour the bell started to ring. As it was not time for mass or the Angelus, someone was sent out from the school to find out what was going on. When he went out, there was a cow chewing the rope, quite unaware of the commotion she was causing.⁶⁴

⁶³ MUNFLA, Q80A-33; 7.

⁶⁴ MUNFLA, MS. 68-11; 17.

Two final secular ringing customs found in Newfoundland, boat launching and church cleaning, involve the use of the bell to announce the beginning of an activity in which community help is required. For the former the bell would be rung to call the men to help with the launching of large boats, and for the latter, to announce that the church was open and ready to be cleaned. Sybil Knee gives the following account from Badger's Quay:

Cleaning the church is . . . [an] annual custom. This was done by women on a date to be announced, when each person is responsible for his own seat and a portion of the entrance. Nowadays each person brings along some water, but at one time a huge cauldron of water was filled and heated over an open fire on the church grounds. The bell is rung to advise the people that the task is to be done on a particular day.⁶⁵

Table 14 shows a typology of ringing customs as found in Newfoundland from which it can be seen that many of the customs from the British tradition never diffused to this part of the New World. This could be for a number of reasons. The province was, as we saw in Chapter 2, without bells for some 200 years, after which lapse many of the older traditions would have been forgotten, and many of the newer ones, brought over by more recent settlers, would probably have been inappropriate for the Newfoundland setting. Basic cultural differences must also have taken their toll, Newfoundland being primarily a fishing region, thus negating those customs associated with agricultural areas and activities in Britain. The result was that the

⁶⁵MUNFLA, Ms. 79-19; 17.

TABLE 14

TYPOLOGY OF NEWFOUNDLAND CHURCH BELL RINGING CUSTOMS

Sacred Custom:

- 1) Call to prayer and worship.
- 2) Announcement of different parts of the service.
- 3) A reminder of, and in celebration of, church festivals.
- 4) To mark rites of passage.

Sacred/Secular Belief:

- 1) Possible remnant of protection of passing soul.

Sacred/Secular Custom:

- 1) Mark important national events.
- 2) Announce arrival of important visitors.

Secular Custom:

- 1) Announce beginning of activities in which community help is required.
 - 2) Mark secular rites of passage.
 - 3) Announce fire and accidents.
 - 4) Used as a directional guide.
-

two major areas of function employed here were those of a totally religious nature, and those of a secular nature which announced some sort of warning. The grey areas of Sacred/Secular Belief and Custom found in the British tradition became even greyer, and almost non-existent in Newfoundland. The people of this province used the bell as a very basic means of communication, with none of the frills and extravagancies found in the British tradition. The bells speak for the people as the people would speak. They also speak of the people. For many years, Newfoundlanders lived by a very basic means of subsistence; hard work, long hours and little money. Life provided little time for frill activities and little money for luxury items and the manner of use of the bell can be seen as a reflection of the way of life itself.

Change ringing, the final custom mentioned in the British typology, has not been discussed in this chapter since it is an area of the British tradition which is distinctive to that country, the economic, climactic and architectural contexts of Newfoundland being responsible for its attrition here. Interestingly, however, it is probably as a result of this custom that the bell tradition per se has been maintained so actively in Great Britain. For changing ringing, the bells must be kept in good working condition, and the enthusiasts of the art encourage this to be so. If the bells are in good working order, they might as well be used for religious purposes, which, after all,

was the original intent.

The outlook in Newfoundland is not quite so optimistic. Bell-mountings fall into disrepair, bells crack, and towers topple under the strain of the swinging weight, renovation often being considered too expensive. Sextons and Church Wardens, like many other people of this generation, are not too enthusiastic about getting up to ring a bell at six in the morning, especially one housed in an open campanile, which might involve standing in the teeth of a howling gale or snow storm to perform the task. Modern electronic communication systems have made many of the bells redundant in their secular roles, and the electronic P/A chime systems are so much more convenient that they are replacing the bells in many churches.

The artifact might be disappearing, although the situation is not actually quite as desperate as it might seem from the previous paragraph, but people's feelings towards the bell, and their understanding of its use as a communication system is slower to decline. If the bell rings, it means something. Its ringing at certain designated times means something specific, and its ringing outside of these times means an emergency of some sort or another. This is the tradition as it is understood even today, and much more so, therefore, in earlier times. It is a tradition understood by everyone, it is a part of their culture, something that belongs to them, something that has been internalised by them. This fact was played upon on at least one

occasion in Newfoundland on that day of "permitted misrule", April Fool's Day, as the following account by Harry Waterman outlines:

. . . the following told me by my father, which he said happened in the year 1940. A fellow rang the church bell, and when people asked why the bell was rung, he was present and said that the minister was here for service. After a great many people turned up in church and had waited for a quarter of an hour after the supposed scheduled service, the young fellow turned up and announced that he was proud to fool the whole bunch of them. Not too many people were pleased with the event, but still, it was All Fool's Day.⁶⁶

Here we see, in one brief incident, just how internalised is the ringing tradition in Newfoundland, and the respect with which church bells are regarded. It is this respect for the item which leads to the problem of what to do with an old bell which has become redundant, for various reasons, in its original role. The following chapter examines the causes of this redundancy, and the ways in which Newfoundlanders have attempted to maintain the item by changing its function.

⁶⁶ MUNFLA, Ms. 69-26; 133.

CHAPTER 5

"Well you don't just throw them away you know!"¹

THE CHANGING FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH BELL
IN NEWFOUNDLAND

¹Telephone interview with Archbishop Seaborn, 8 April 1981.

Well, if you don't just throw them away, what do you do with church bells that are no longer required, or serviceable as a means of audio communication? Before answering that question, which is basically what I hope to do in this chapter, it might be advantageous to look, first of all, at the reasons behind this role change. Why might church bells become redundant as a means of communication?

In the historical survey in Chapter 2 we saw the introduction of electronic chime systems to Newfoundland in the 1960s. These have caused a dramatic decline in the use of the bell as such, taking over its role, and leaving it as an artifact of an antique communication system.

Modernisation also affects bells when older churches are replaced by new ones designed for the 1980s. Very often, this design does not include a bell tower--architectural taste seeming to dictate that bells are out and electronic systems are in, whether we like it or not--the speakers for the electronic system being subtly incorporated.

Another reason for this decline is that old churches and towers gradually fall into disrepair, the cost of renovation often being considered too expensive to be worthwhile.

A stage is reached when it is no longer safe to ring the bell, and it ceases to function in its communicative role and remains, inactive, in the bell tower.

Sometimes, through extended use, or as a result of mishandling, the bell is cracked and, depending on the degree of damage, often loses its tone quality completely

such that it is no longer capable of sounding out its messages. A final cause for the decline in use of church bells was the Government Resettlement programme of the 1950s and 1960s which closed many smaller communities, moving the people to larger centres. This had a dramatic effect on the continuing use of many church bells. In some instances the people went to communities without a church bell in which case the bell was also taken and put back into service in its new location. (See Appendix T for a list of relocated bells.) In other instances, the receiving community, already having a bell of its own, had neither need nor room for another, and the bell from the resettled community became redundant.

But what becomes of these bells that no longer call the people to worship, rejoice at weddings and mourn at funerals? Various things. Sometimes a bell from a resettled community is left there, unheeded and not needed, as was the case in Great Jarvis, a community on the South Coast of Newfoundland which closed in 1964 when the last three families moved away. A few of the houses remained, as did the old church which finally toppled in a wind storm, the bell falling from the tower and landing in a field of grass where it now sits, cracked and rusting (Figure 34).

Very occasionally bells from resettled communities were integrated into the church life, much as the people were integrated into the community life in their new

location. In St. Saviour's Anglican Church in Hermitage there are two bells in the tower (Figure 35). The bell on the left of the picture was brought over from Pass Island after that community was resettled, and the one on the right is the original Hermitage bell. Today, the Hermitage bell is only used for funerals, the Pass Island bell performing all the other functions, but up until a few years ago, both were used for the call to worship on Sunday mornings. For the first bell, rung between 10:30 a.m. and 10:40 a.m. the Pass Island bell was used, and for the second bell, rung between 10:50 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. the one from Hermitage was used. The difference in pitch and tone is such that the people were able to tell from the sound whether it was the first or second bell and, therefore, had a much more accurate idea of how near it was to service time. The presence of two functioning bells in the same tower is, however, very rare, and the latter was the only example I encountered during my research.

In other towers containing two bells, it is more usual to find one in working order and the other unserviceable. This is the case in St. John the Evangelist Church in Boxey Harbour. The present church in that community was floated, by barge, from Jersey Harbour about ten years ago, their own church being demolished and the materials used to build a community hall. There was a bell in the Jersey Harbour church but since it was cracked, it was taken down and left in the second level of the tower, the

original bell from Boxey Harbour being hung in the third level.

Bells from resettled communities which are not required for church use can often be found in the possession of lay people. Not wishing to see the bell left behind, they bring it with them to their new location. Then a variety of things might happen to it. Just what, for example, do you do with an old church bell? Sometimes the question remains unanswered and the bell is left lying on the beach, as with the old Stone Valley bell which is now in Hermitage (Figure 36); or lying by the side of the house of the person who brought it over, as with the bell brought from Grole to Harbour Breton by Mr. Stewart (Figure 37). Sometimes they are placed on a stand and displayed for public view which was the destination of the bells from Sagona Island and Miller's Passage (see Figure 38 for the latter), both of which can be found in Tom Jenson's yard in Harbour Breton. In most cases these bells are brought out by members of the resettled communities, they having a nostalgic attachment to the artifact as being a reminder of their past way of life. On other occasions, people may just be attracted to bells, and, having a desire to own one, buy it from a church about to close down, and display it in their garden. The old bell from Ship Island in Notre Dame Bay is now displayed in Dr. Harper's garden on Logy Bay Road in St. John's (Figure 39). In the latter case the bell is not so much a reminder of a specific way of life, but of

a general way of life of the more rural areas of Newfoundland, contrasted against life in the city which, as we saw in the introduction, is not particularly well endowed with church bells or ringing traditions.

Then there are those bells which have become redundant by replacement; either by a new church not designed for bell hanging, or simply by the installation of an electric system in the old church. Sometimes the ancient and modern remain side by side, as in Brookfield United Church where the bell and speakers share the same tower (Figure 40). Commonly in these instances, the electronic chimes perform most of the functions, the bell being reserved for funerals.

Often, however, there is not sufficient room for the two systems in the one tower, and the bell is removed after which it may meet with a number of fates. It might be placed in the church vestibule as an open display of the church's "sound" history, and even a part of its written history if the bell bears an inscription, as is the case with the bell in St. Mary's Anglican Church in St. Anthony (Figure 41). Failing this, because people are loathe to throw a bell away, it might be stored in the priest's vestry, as in the Roman Catholic Church in Campbell's Creek (Figure 42); in the basement of the minister's house, as with the Hickman's Harbour United Church bell (Figure 43); or in sheds along with other items of church furniture, the disposal of which people are unsure

about, as with the bell in Head Bay D'Espoir (Figure 44). In other instances the bells are mounted, mostly for display purposes, but sometimes also for the purpose of tolling at funerals, as with the 42-inch diameter bell at St. Matthew's Anglican Church in Rocky Harbour which was restored and mounted on concrete in 1980 (Figure 45).

This latter practice is becoming increasingly common as older churches with their built-in bell towers, such as the United Church in Clarendville (Figure 46), are replaced by buildings of modern design with their built-in "speaker systems" as with the new Memorial United Church in Clarendville, dedicated in 1978 (Figure 47). The bell in this case is displayed at the side of the church (Figure 48).

Most of these bells are in ringable condition, and many of those mounted for display purposes could easily be put back into service were the chime system to break down or even burst into flames as happened two years ago at the United Church in Pound Cove, the bell being brought back to instant action. Many of the stored bells are also in good condition, and it is perhaps a sign of the thriftiness of the people that they are kept, albeit hidden away, the idea of their re-use at a later date being uppermost in the mind; this being quite a strong possibility with the energy problems of the present time.

However, the above explanation does not account for the retention of bells which are cracked and no longer useable, and there are many of these in the province as well.

Figure 34. Bell lying rusting in a field in the resettled community of Great Jarvis.



Figure 35. St. Saviour's Anglican Church, Hermitage, showing the relocated Pass Island bell on the left, and the original Hermitage bell on the right.



Figure 36. Bell from the resettled community of Stone Valley (Little Bay) lying on the beach behind André Rubinich's house in Hermitage.



Figure 37. Bell from the resettled community of Grolé lying beside Mr. Stewart's house in Harbour Breton.



Figure 38. Bell from resettled community of Miller's Passage. One of two bells displayed in Tom Jenson's yard in Harbour Breton.



Figure 39. Bell from the resettled community of Ship Island displayed in Dr. Harpur's garden in St. John's.



Figure 40. Old bell and new speakers share tower space in Brookfield United Church.



Figure 41. Old bell displayed in the vestibule of St. Mary's Anglican Church,
St. Anthony.



Figure 42. Bell stored in the priest's vestry, Campbell's Creek.



Figure 43. Bell stored in the basement of the United Church minister's house in Hickman's Harbour.



Figure 44. Bell stored in a shed next to the Anglican Church at Head Bay D'Espoir.

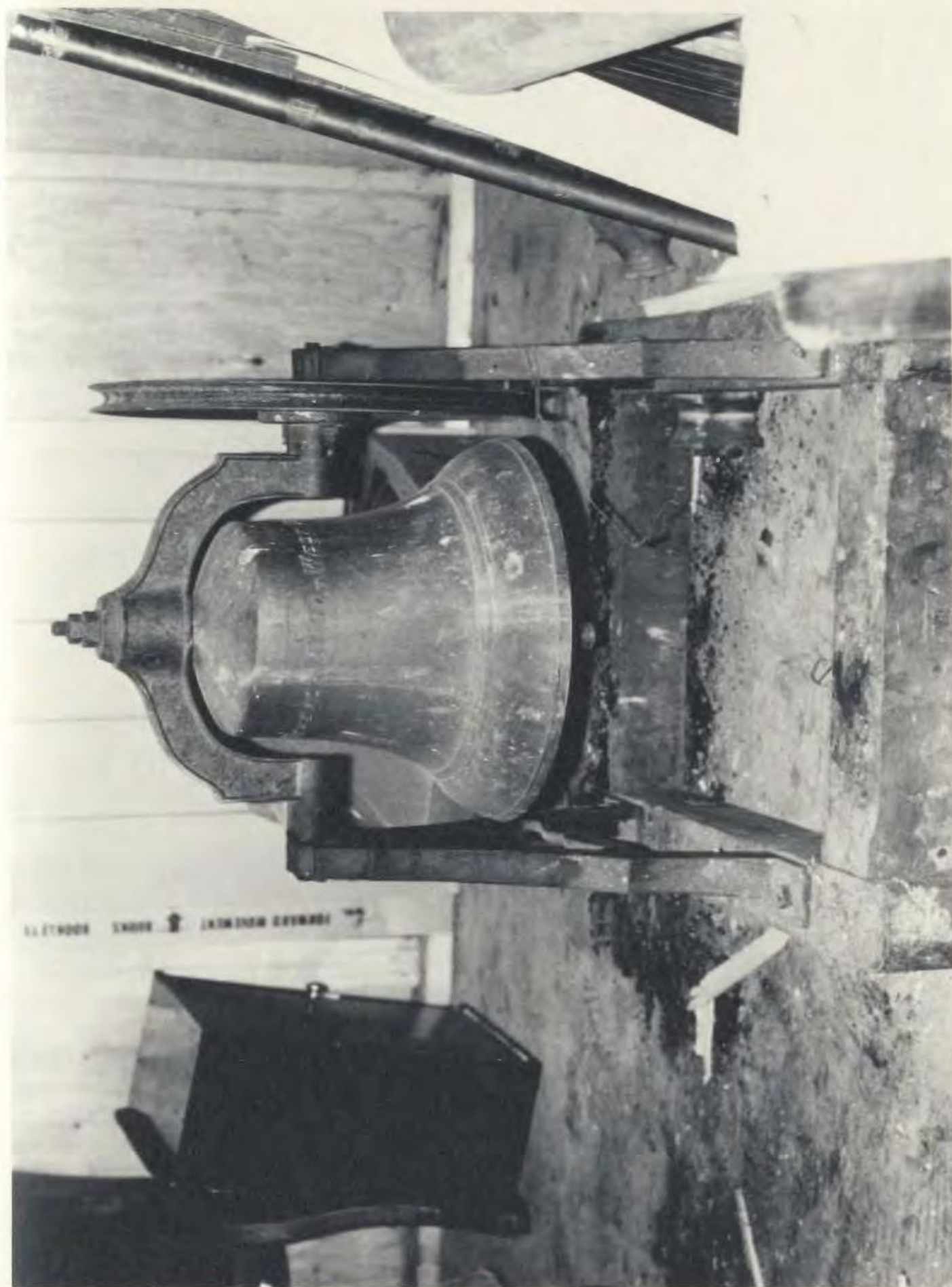


Figure 45. Old bell restored and displayed in front of St. Matthew's Anglican Church in Rocky Harbour. (Photograph by Joanne Macaskill)



Figure 46. -Old United Church at Clarendville with
built-in bell tower.

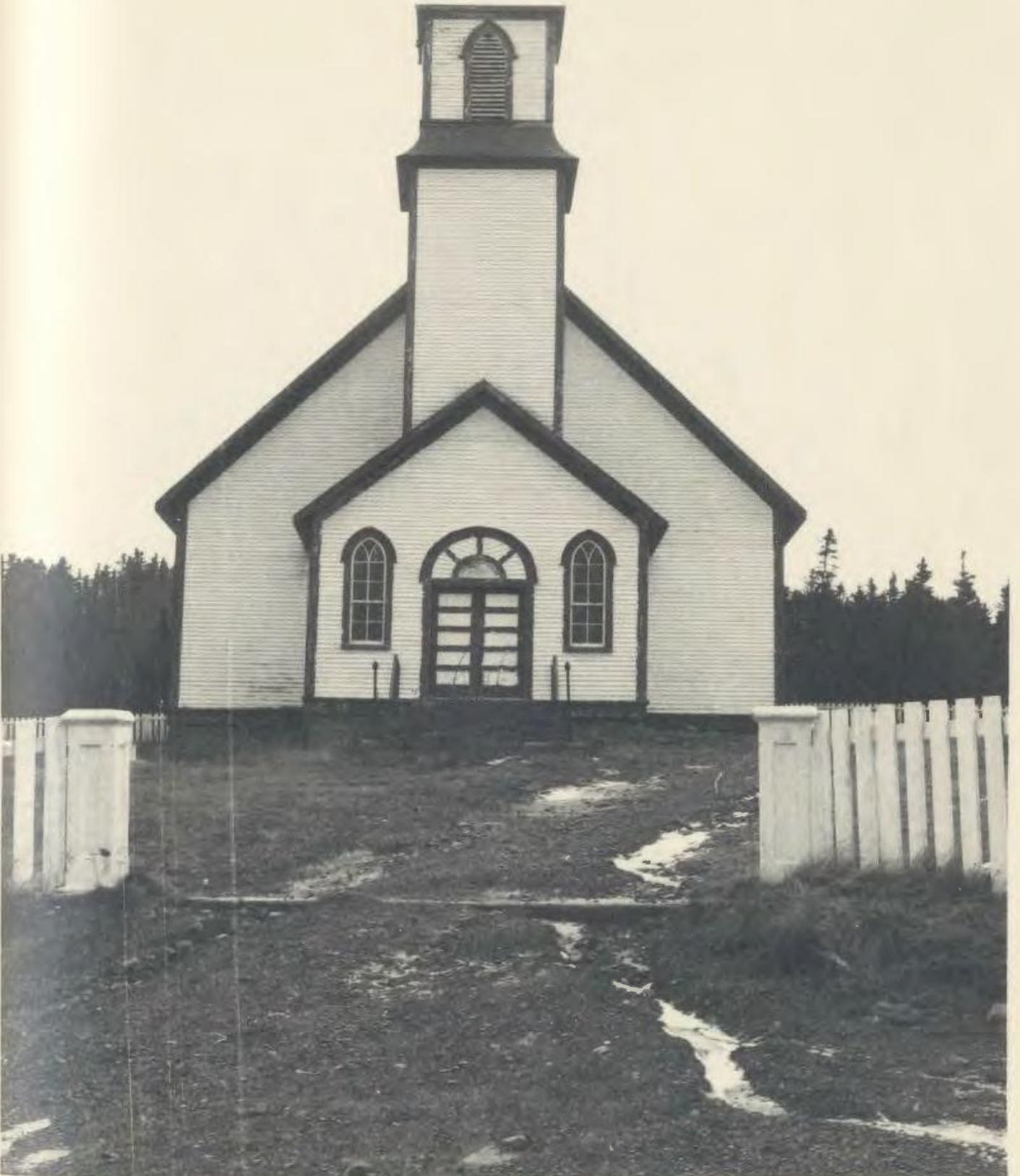


Figure 47. New United Church at Clarendville with
built-in speaker system.



Figure 48. Bell from old church displayed beside new church in Clarendville.



Cracked bells can be found in a variety of places: in graveyards, as with the old United Church bell in Frederickton (Figure 49); lying in the church grounds; placed beside the church steps for display purposes (see Figure 50--the old Roman Catholic bell in King's Cove); or mounted for display purposes outside the church (see Figure 51--fire damaged cornerstone and bell at Summerville United Church). The Summerville bell and cornerstone were the only recognisable items to survive the fire which destroyed the old church in 1977. Many bells do not fare as well as the above in fires, and when the church burnt down in Sandy Point, Bay St. George, only 15 pounds of the bell remained in the debris. This was made into brooches and pendants which the parishioners bought as keepsakes of their old church and bell.

Other bells which have become cracked and useless in their original function, are not only displayed, but also given a new function and, inevitably, one far removed from their original purpose. When is a bell not a bell? When it becomes a flowerpot, this being the prevailing theme when bells are given a new function. That this is not a new idea is evidenced by the condition of some of the "bell gardens", they, on occasion, becoming so much a part of their surroundings that they are almost swallowed by it, and become quite difficult to find (see Figure 52 of the old bell in Pools' Cove). This bell was broken when it turned over on its mounting and fell after being rung a

little too enthusiastically at the end of World War I. A little easier to locate was the old United Church bell in Bosworlos (Figure 53), whilst that at Newman's Cove is prominently displayed in front of the United Church (Figure 54), is painted rust brown and white, and contains a garden of painted rocks and plastic flowers. At St. Ignatius Roman Catholic Church in St. Albans the bell-flowerpot has become a central and integral part of the landscaping (Figure 55) and the garden within the bell is well maintained with bedding plants (Figure 56). This new function for the bell is not restricted to display in the garden of the church itself, and in Harbour Breton the priest's garden boasts two such pots, one of which is pictured in Figure 57.

Roger Abrahams has referred to items of folklore as "organisms" which "live, die and mutate." He points out in his article "Folklore in Culture: Notes Toward an Analytic Method" that

cultural necessities are mutable, can and do change. With their function gone, pieces of folklore will naturally fade and disappear. But any piece of lore has both form and function and the form may be able to achieve other cultural functions and therefore continue to exist, though in a different place in the life of that group.²

This is exactly what has happened with some of the church bells in Newfoundland. Their original function having

²Roger D. Abrahams, "Folklore in Culture: Notes Toward an Analytic Method," in Readings in American Folklore, ed. Jan Harold Brunvand (New York: W.W. Norton, 1979), p. 396.

become redundant through the course of damage or replacement, their role has been adapted to that of nostalgic and/or decorative display. Others are presently in a transitional stage between the original and secondary functions, lying dormant on beaches, in gardens, basements and sheds. Table 15 shows the types of bells in these three categories.

TABLE 15
TYPOLOGY OF THE SECONDARY FUNCTIONS OF CHURCH
BELLS IN NEWFOUNDLAND

Dormant	Nostalgic Display	Decorative Display
1) Stored.	1) Displayed/semi-functional.	1) Flowerpot Bells.
2) Lying around.	2) Displayed/non-functional.	
3) Relocated but lying around.	3) Relocated and displayed/semi-or non-functional.	

Although I previously spoke of the dormant bells as being in a transitional stage between the original and secondary functions, this and the display categories can also be viewed as a transitional stage between original function and death, with the possibility of movement between the three categories, and from any one of these categories back to the original function, or on to death. The exception, of course, would be those bells which were damaged, that being the initial reason for their change in role. Tables 16 and 17 show the life cycle of cracked and uncracked bells

respectively, as seen in the province today, the latter type of bell being that which was made redundant by either modernisation or resettlement. The decorative display category has been included in the life cycle of the cracked bell only since research has shown that to be the only type of bell adopting this particular secondary function.

TABLE 16

LIFE CYCLE OF A CRACKED BELL AS SEEN IN
NEWFOUNDLAND TODAY

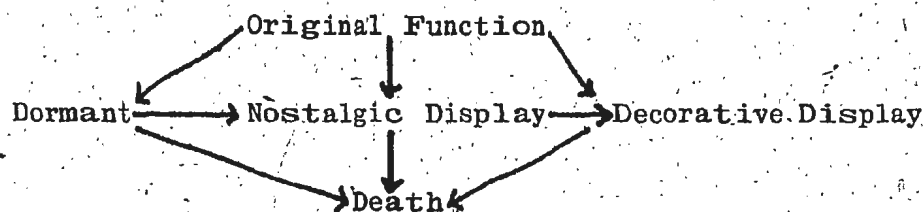
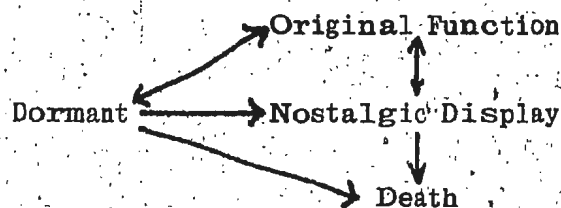


TABLE 17

LIFE CYCLE OF A BELL WHOSE FUNCTION HAS BEEN MADE
REDUNDANT BY MODERNISATION OR RESETTLEMENT



Thus we see how the item, in Abrahams' terms, lives, mutates and dies. There have been many bells in Newfoundland which have met their deaths in the bottoms of bays and rivers,

although, in some cases, they first performed the intermediary function of "anchor" for a dory's mooring rope. Others have met their death, in regards to this province at least, by being sold to junk/antique dealers from the mainland of Canada. But, in pure numbers, the vast majority of defunct bells have been retained in the province and in many cases have been given a new function. The interesting question is "Why is this?" Why do people from resettled communities bring their bells with them whether they are to be used or not? Why do people retain cracked bells which can obviously no longer serve their original purpose?

Mr. Archie Williams of Pool's Cove told me:

We're thinking of getting the chimes put in, it's a bit cold standing--but we want to keep the bell in good shape.³

But why bother to keep it in good shape if it's not going to be used? What is it about church bells that make people want to "hang on to them"? I think the answer lies in any one, or combination of the following four reasons:

- 1) general thriftiness;
- 2) an uncertainty of what to do with a defunct religious artifact;
- 3) an attempt to hold on to a disappearing life style;
- 4) emotional ties.

That general thriftiness is a consideration is evidenced by the number of bells which are displayed in such a manner as

³Personal interview with Mr. Archie Williams, 25 August 1980.

to be ringable. Although, generally speaking, once they have reached this stage they are only used for tolling at funerals, they can, when need be, fulfill all of their former functions.

The problem of what to do with a defunct religious artifact deserves some consideration because it is just that--a problem. Items of church furnishing possess a certain aura, be it as a result of their blessing, dedication or consecration, or simply because of our internalised belief system surrounding such things. As a result, it would be considered somewhat improper to throw bells, statues and the like on the garbage dump. Sometimes the difficulty is alleviated when a church and its contents are deconsecrated prior to demolition, but many bells have not been through the performance of this service, and another alternative must be found. Perhaps those bells lying around on church property are indicative of this dilemma, they being left there in the hope that someone or some event will provide a solution. In other cases the problem has been solved with the adoption of the display function.

There is always a tendency as we move with the changes of modernisation, with their uncertainty, and, in many cases, bewilderment, to attempt to hold on to something of the past; the era in which we felt comparatively safe and secure. Sometimes modernisation seems to move too fast for us and we find ourselves in times difficult to comprehend but with which we must contend. There is a

certain amount of solace to be found in memories of what seem to be the calmer times of days gone by. Church bells and other items of bygone eras are, in themselves, physical memories of these times, but they also serve to trigger mental memories, providing, in many ways, a safety valve against the overpowering anxieties of change.

Related to this, and probably the largest motivating element for retaining old church bells, is the emotional ties we have to them. Man, by nature, is sentimental, and the more so over the occasions surrounding the dramatic incidents in his life, and those surrounding his belief systems--in this instance, those of a religious nature. In the previous chapter we saw how closely linked were the church bell and these aspects of man's life. The old bell rang at his wedding, and at the weddings of his friends; it tolled his colleagues to their graves; it helped him home when he was lost in a fog at sea; and it called him to his church service and prayer, all vital aspects of his life. In many ways the bell has been with him too long and been too much a part of him for him to want to throw it away.⁴

The following account expresses the feelings of the people from the resettled community of Deer Island towards "their" bell which was relocated and rung in Glovertown, and the same feelings hold true for people's

⁴For further discussion of the secondary use of items of material culture and the motivation behind this use, see W.F.H. Nicolaisen, "Distorted Function" In Material Aspects of Culture, Folklore Forum 12 (1979), 223-233.

attitudes in general towards their bells:

The people from Deer Island settled on the North side of Alexander Bay. The bell from Deer Island was put in Glovertown South Church tower. On Sunday mornings the people would stand outside and say "Listen, that's our bell." All the women would cry, and a hush would come as everyone stood on the bridge and listened till it was over. "That's our bell," they would say, as they each privately relived what the bell had said and what it meant to them as they stood so far from home.⁵

It is this sentimental attachment, perhaps more than any other, which accounts for the retention of old bells and man's efforts to adapt their function such that they might survive as a form and be preserved in his changing environment.

In time, however, man changes, as Ward Goodenough explains in his book Cooperation in Change:

As circumstances alter the intensity of people's wants, change the nature of their emotional conflicts, or provide new channels for dealing with them, the meaning and value of their established customs and beliefs can change.⁶

As a result, the sentiments of one generation towards an old church bell may not be held by the next, and in consequence, bells, like the one seen in Pool's Cove, having once been converted for decorative display, are now neglected. They can be seen as settling slowly into their graves in the church yard. And it is in this manner that the life cycle of the church bell concludes with its death.

⁵ Personal interview with Kathleen Baker, 2 July 1981.

⁶ Ward Goodenough, Cooperation in Change (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1963), p. 140.

Figure 49. Old bell from Frederickton United Church lying in the graveyard.



Figure 50. Cracked bell from King's Cove R.C. Church placed beside the front steps for display purposes.



Figure 51. Fire-damaged bell and cornerstone mounted for display purposes
outside the new United Church in Summerville.



Figure 52. Old Pool's Cove bell functioning as a flowerpot, but almost swallowed by surrounding vegetation.



Figure 53. Bosworlos United Church bell flowerpot beginning to merge with the surrounding undergrowth.



Figure 54. Bell garden of painted stones and plastic flowers prominently displayed in front of Newman's Cove United Church.



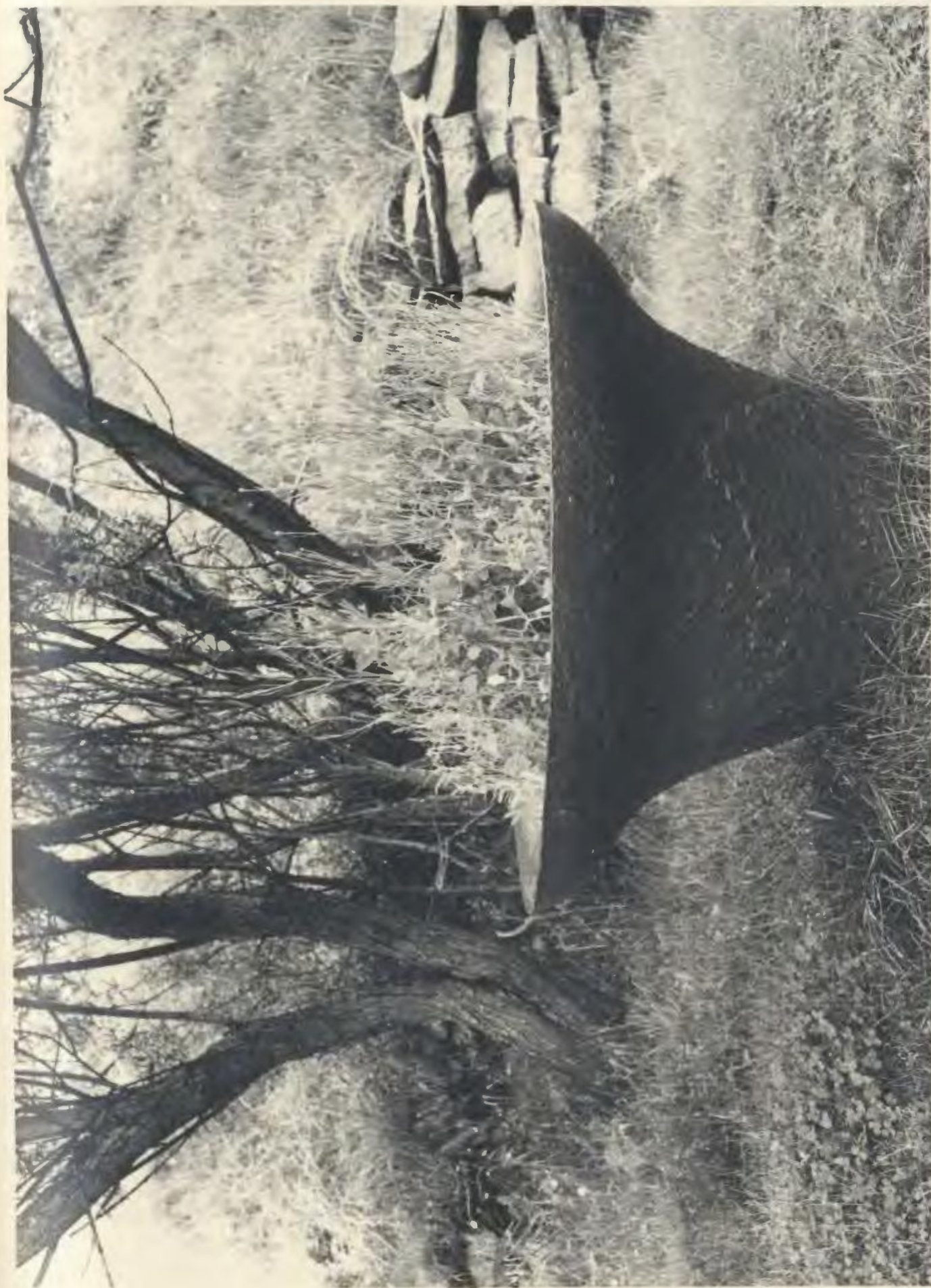
Figure 55 Bell flowerpot as an integral part of the landscaping at St. Ignatius R.C. Church, St. Albans.



Figure 56. Bell contains a well-maintained garden of bedding plants, St. Ignatius R.C. Church, St. Albans.



Figure 57. One of two bell flowerpots in the priest's garden in
Harbour Breton.



The number of electronic chime systems in the province increases yearly as a result of the acculturative influences of North America, and is one of the primary causes, today, of the church bells taking on a secondary role. This, however, is not the only area of the church bell tradition in which we find these influences at work, and in the next chapter I will look at the way in which the structures built to house bells, once culturally characteristic of Newfoundland, have also been affected by the interaction with North American neighbours.

CHAPTER 6

CAMPANILE STYLES CHARACTERISTIC OF NEWFOUNDLAND

In the three preceding chapters we have seen how church bell inscriptions, ringing customs, and the secondary functions of bells have been adapted to suit the needs of the Newfoundland context. In this chapter I intend to look at one more aspect of the church bell tradition which has been affected by local ideas and ideals--that of the styles of the structures in which the bells are housed.

Local adaptation is not so prevalent in those churches with built-in bell towers, they following the more or less traditional and accepted pattern for two-level (Figure 58) and three-level (Figure 59) tower designs. But amongst those towers separated from the church, the campaniles, where there is a less specific cultural norm in design, we find not only variation, but also styles which are fitting for the local environment. Generally speaking, these fall into three main categories, which I have labelled

- 1) the dog-kennel style;
- 2) the lighthouse style;
- 3) the lobster float watchman's hut style.

Dog kennels, a common feature of the Newfoundland landscape (Figure 60), are of a basic rectangular design topped with a slanted roof, allowing enough space for a dog to lie down and giving him protection from the weather elements. The dog-kennel style bell tower functions in the same manner towards the bell as the kennel does towards the dog, the basic design being adapted slightly to allow the

bell's sound to travel. Thus we find a dog-kennel structure with the equivalent of four doors (Figure 61) as opposed to the one door required by the dog--a simple enough, though effective and essential modification. This type of campanile can be found in the ground level version, pictured above at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church in Burgeo, and also in the raised version as at St. Simon and St. Jude Anglican Church in Francois (Figure 62).

Another common feature of the landscape of Newfoundland, with its sea faring way of life and coastal communities, is the lighthouse--a practical necessity for this type of environment (Figure 63--lighthouse at Woody Point). Many campaniles in the province are built on a similar design (see Figure 64, St. Paul's Anglican Church, Island Harbour), or with slight variation (see Figure 65, La Poile) whilst still maintaining the general appearance of a lighthouse. This is a very fitting stylistic adaptation since the light and the bell both function as important communication systems, the basic design worked out to be practical for the former being found equally suited to the latter.

The final category of the 'lobster float watchman's hut style', although not prevalent around the province--I have found only one example--belongs to this group in that it is an adaptation of a structure originally designed for another purpose.



Figure 58. Traditional style church with two-level
bell tower, Morrisville Anglican Church.



Figure 59. Traditional style church with three-level bell tower, Britannia United Church.



Figure 60. Dog kennel, Gander Bay.



Figure 61. Dog-kennel style campanile, St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Burgeo.



Figure 62. Raised dog-kennel style campanile, St.
Simon and St. Jude Anglican Church,
Francois,



Figure 63. Woody Point Lighthouse.



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Figure 64. Lighthouse style campanile, St. Paul's
Anglican Church, Island Harbour, Fogo
Island.



Figure 65. Lighthouse style campanile, La Poile.



In English Harbour West, before the days of rapid collection and delivery, lobsters were kept alive in large, compartmentalised floats (Figure 66) moored in the harbour. On top of the float was a hut in which a night watchman would sit to guard against looting. When the old Anglican church with its bell tower was demolished in 1962 it was replaced by a new one without a tower, and another alternative had to be found to hang the bell. The basic design of the watchman's hut was taken, slightly modified by having the window and door placed on alternate walls, and the bell was erected on top (Figure 67). An intricate pulley system was installed such that the bell can be rung from inside the hut, the bell ringer thus being protected from adverse weather conditions.

All of the above campanile styles can be viewed as related to other structures frequently found in the Newfoundland context. This is not so much indicative of the Newfoundlander's desire for his constructions to melt in to the surroundings, but of his initiative and adaptability. Most churches and campaniles around the province are built by local people who are carpenters, but not specialists in the art of church and campanile construction. It stands to reason then that they would take a design with which they are familiar, and which they can see as being practical for the purpose, and adapt it to their needs. This, it would appear, is what they have done with the dog-kennel, the lighthouse and the watchman's hut.

Figure 66. Compartmentalised lobster floats and watchman's hut, English Harbour West.



Figure 67. Lobster float watchman's hut style
campanile, English Harbour West.



Some structures, such as the campanile at Sibley's Cove (Figure 68) can be seen as partial constructs of these styles, the latter having the basic, but incomplete form of the lighthouse. In other examples influences from the mainland of Canada and other parts of North America can be seen. The campanile in Port-au-Port West (Figure 69) was built in 1963 from a design brought from the mainland by the priest incumbent at the time. When compared with the carillon tower (see Figure 70 of Carillon tower in Victoria, B.C.) so prevalent in other parts of North America, its similarity becomes immediately apparent. There has been an increasing number of campaniles of this style erected in the province in the last two decades, and one of similar design was completed in Jacques Fontaine as recently as July 1981. The move towards the mainland design is, perhaps, an indication of the increasing number of ministers coming to Newfoundland from there, and the developing attachment of this province to Canada since she became a part of that country thirty-two years ago.

One final area of change related to bells and their towers is not so much concerned with their design or function, as with the methods of their installation. Here again, modernization has influenced the process. In the old days, and the not so old days, bells were hoisted up either the inside or outside of the bell tower by means of a block and tackle pulley system (see Figures 71 and 72-- bell being installed in the United Church at St. Anthony in

1958). The raising of these bells was not without its hazards as the Rt. Rev. Mark Genge, Bishop of Central Newfoundland, explained to me in a letter of 6 April 1981:

It was in 1951 that the Church had been completed in Stephenville. However, the small Anglican congregation was struggling for an identity. The ladies of the C.E.W.A. had provided money to buy a bell and the bell had been ordered sometime during the summer. It was just before Christmas that it arrived. Very few people knew that it had come and so four men, myself included, decided to put the bell in place in the belfry. We were able, with difficulty, to lift it to the first landing, but because we each had a rope no one could lift the bell onto the landing and so we had to let it go crashing down on the floor again. However, on the second attempt we were able to get it to the first landing and then onto the second landing where it was to be placed. On Christmas Eve the bell was first rung to call the people to worship. When the people heard the bell and realized it was their own church bell calling them to worship, it caused very happy hearts and tearful eyes as they responded to its call. It was one of the very many happy memories that I have of my stay in Stephenville.¹

A more recent installation, after a new campanile had been constructed for the bell at the Roman Catholic Church in Trinity, Trinity Bay (Figure 73), was greatly facilitated by the Newfoundland Light and Power Company who obligingly lifted it on to the platform with the boom on one of their trucks.

Thus we see that modernisation and the future direction of the province has affected even these parts of the church bell tradition. What might be regarded as Newfoundland's "traditional" campanile styles can now be seen as

¹Letter received from Rt. Rev. Mark Genge, Bishop of Central Newfoundland, 6 April 1981.

modifications of other culturally defined structures, these having been adapted to meet the needs of a new function.

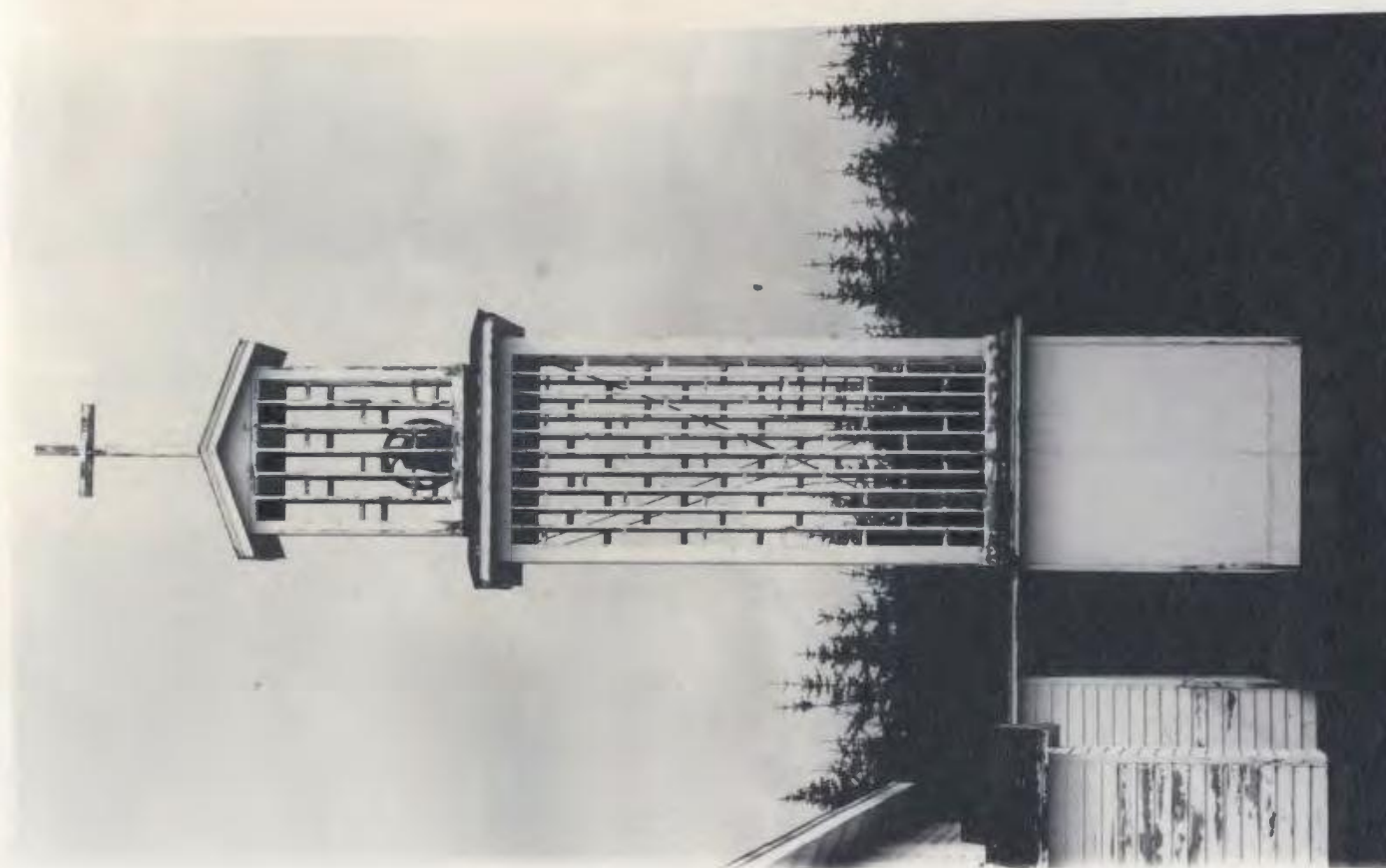
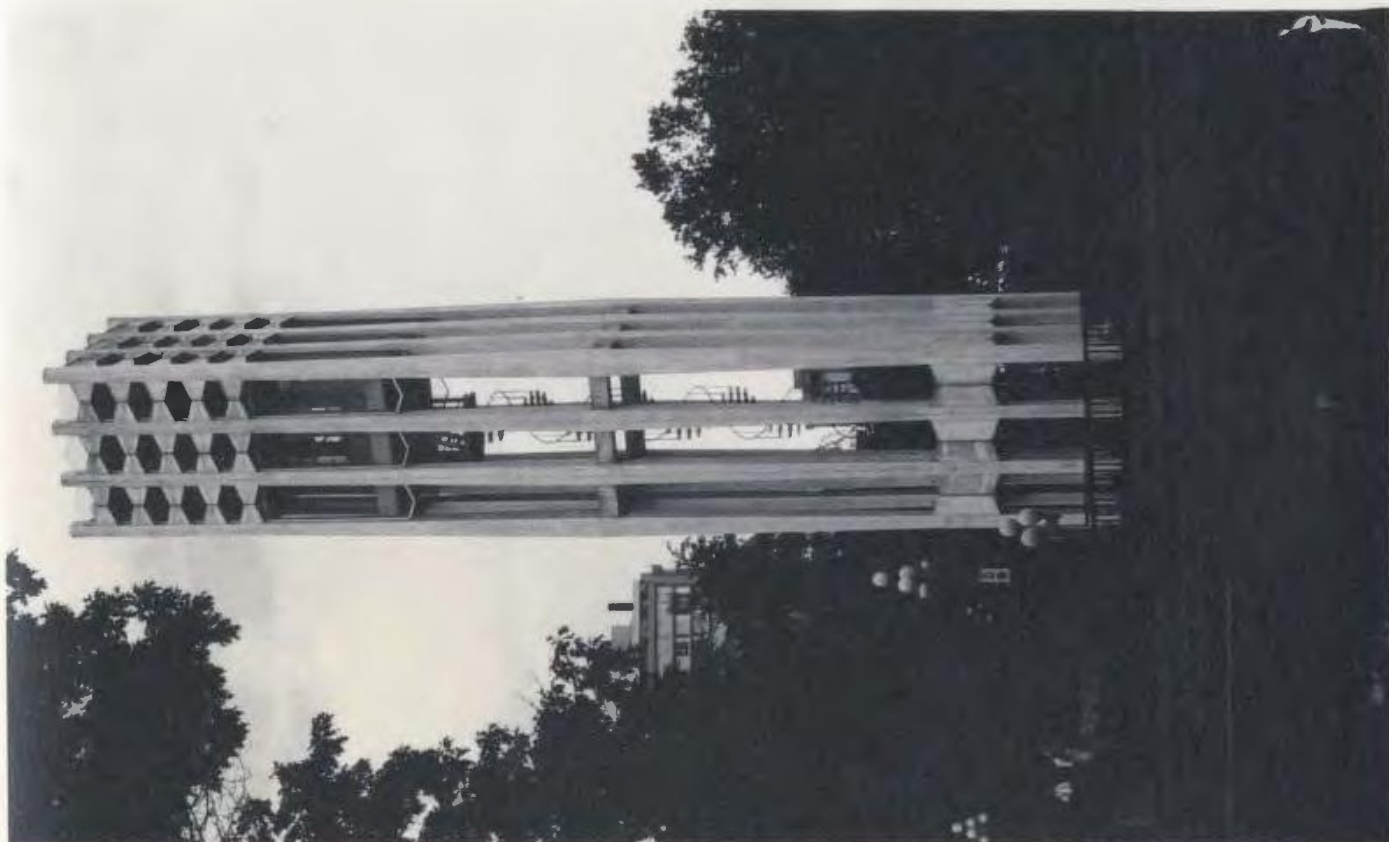
And, 'as the church bell tradition influenced the function of some previously accepted local structures, the confederation of Newfoundland with Canada and the resultant interaction of the peoples, has similarly influenced the styles of local campaniles, evidenced by the influx of mainland versions. It would seem that whilst, on the one hand, Newfoundland is clinging to the past by retaining her old bells, she is, on the other, gradually moving into the future, which presumably lies with Canada, by adopting some of the latter's characteristics.

Figure 68. Partial construct of lighthouse style campanile, Sibley's Cove
United Church.



Figure 69. Campanile showing North American carillon tower influence,
Port-au-Port West R.C. Church.

Figure 70. Carillon tower, Victoria, British Columbia. (Photograph
by Joanne Macaskill)



Figures 71 and 72. Bell being installed in the United Church in St. Anthony in 1958.
(Photographs by Rev. Peter Macaskill)



Figure 73. Campanile at Trinity R.C. Church, Trinity Bay, where the bell was installed with the aid of the boom on a Newfoundland Light and Power Company truck.



CHAPTER 7

RINGING THE CHANGES:

CULTURAL CHANGE REFLECTED BY THE CUSTOMS ASSOCIATED

WITH THE CHURCH BELL TRADITION

The topics examined in the preceding chapters make interesting studies in themselves, and point to the changes that have occurred within the various aspects of the church bell tradition in different cultural settings, and within a single cultural setting at different periods in history. They give, as it were, an overview of a changing tradition. However, as "no man is an island entire of itself", neither is a tradition entire of itself, for it is just one small part of the total functional system of a culture. As such, it is representative of that culture, and indicative of its elements of stability and change.

Thus far we have seen how the church bell functioned in Great Britain and how its use and purpose changed as Britain developed and man's attitudes, values and desires altered. The most dramatic changes were seen after the Reformation, evidenced not only by the style and content of church bell inscriptions, but also by the loss of many pre-Reformation ringing customs. A further loss of a considerable number of ringing customs was seen after World War II when man again re-evaluated his life-style, his needs, and his wants. After a period of six years during which the bells were silenced because of the war, society realised that many of the ringing customs were being continued purely out of habit, though they had become redundant as a result of industrialisation and urbanisation in earlier times.

We also saw the adoption of the tradition into the Newfoundland context in the early part of the nineteenth century, with alterations of the custom to suit the needs of the people in this new location, and further changes associated with the later development of the province. In this chapter I will look at the tradition in Newfoundland in regard to the way it reflects culture change, first by its movement from the British to the Newfoundland context, and latterly, within the Newfoundland environment itself.

In Chapter 2 we saw the ponderous beginnings of the tradition in 1820 after a period of some 200 years of European settlement on the island, and 100 years of religious contact. It is evident from this tardy introduction alone that Newfoundlanders were able to survive quite adequately without church bells, either as a sacred or a secular means of communication. So, the question arises, why did they adopt them into their society? Perhaps it was simply that a need existed for an audible system which overcame the restrictions and limitations of visual and word of mouth communication. Perhaps the number of losses at sea, on the ice, and in the woods had increased to the point whereby a far-reaching, audible directional guide had become a necessity. Perhaps pressure was being brought to bear on the local inhabitants by immigrant ministers familiar with the tradition in their home countries. Perhaps the local people felt that it was a part of their heritage which deserved, and which they

desired to be incorporated into their society. Probably, it was a combination of these elements. Whichever way we look at it, however, we can be sure that there was a need for some sort of audible communication system which was compatible with the context into which it was brought.

Prior to the introduction of the bells, the mode of communication employed to announce church services in the Anglican and Methodist denominations was the flag, usually hoisted up the flag pole about half an hour before the service was due to begin. As communities grew in size, the flag, once visible to every home, was now obscured from the view of many houses, its efficiency thus being considerably reduced. Its effect was also largely dependent on an element of chance--if you didn't happen to be looking at the right time, you might well miss the message, not an unlikely event with the irregular visiting times of ministers. Thus, much communication was still dependent on mouth to mouth transmission.

Raising the alarm in case of fire or other types of emergencies was also dependent on oral communication, and although "bad news travels fast", this method has its limitations. Men lost in boats in the fog is not a new concern to Newfoundlanders, it has been with them ever since they first began to fish the waters around these shores. It is also a problem which they had tried to alleviate before the coming of the church bell as Gertrude Pike explains:

If at any time it got foggy while the men were still out fishing, the women would beat on drums to let the men know where land was.¹

This account was from Lance au Loup, and it was not uncommon for the women in other areas to bang on pots and pans for the same purpose. This method of communication, too, was limited in its efficiency especially in relation to the distance over which it could, and would be required, to travel. Thus, the need was evidenced in both the sacred and secular contexts, and something had to be found to counteract this inadequacy. The church bell was chosen. That Newfoundlanders should adopt this particular custom was a logical outcome of their heritage. Goodenough points out that

the established modes of action and belief, to which we refer as people's customs, are something they have made out of experience, the distillates, as it were, of their history. And the fact that customs differ reflects different learning experiences rather than genetic endowments.²

later explaining that

routines that are habitual at one period in a person's or society's lifetime may cease to be so later. As long as people know of them, however, the recipes for these routines are no less a part of their culture and may be brought back into use in the future.³

The church bell tradition, then, was a part of the culture which the British emigrants brought with them to

¹MUNFLA, Ms. 78-416; 5.

²Ward Goodenough, Cooperation in Change (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1963), p. 63.

³Goodenough, p. 266.

Newfoundland. It went into a dormant state, presumably for the reasons of lack of need initially, and lack of finances latterly, but was still known to the people and therefore in Goodenough's terms was still a part of their culture. This knowledge would be periodically reinforced, and continued in new generations, through stories told about the "Old Country" by the early settlers, more recent immigrants and missionaries, and mariners returning from voyages across the Atlantic. Then, when the need arose, it was reincorporated in a tangible form.

It is after the reinstitution of the church bell into this basically British oriented culture that we begin to see changes in the tradition. Customs, it was pointed out earlier, are a product of learning, and the knowledge gained from learning to survive in different environments leads to variations within customs shared by these different cultures. The differences between the natural environments of Britain and Newfoundland must not only have come as quite a shock to the original settlers, but must also have forced them into an immediate learning situation. They had left behind the fertile fields of the agricultural areas, the resources of the industrial regions, the imports and products of the coastal areas, and the protection of the laws, government, and King of their own country. They were faced with an island composed largely of rocks, lakes, bogs and trees, inhabited by what would have been considered as "savage" Beothuk Indians, with no government, no industry,

no farming, no towns, no villages, no nothing--except, of course, the fish which were the prime motive for coming.

Somehow the early settler had to learn to cope with this new, and in many ways hostile, environment. He had to find ways of making it habitable in his terms and of making it work for him such that he could eke out a basic survival. The topography of the island more or less determined a life oriented towards the water, both fresh and salt, rather than the land, the latter being of a nature such that extensive farming was out of the question. Gradually the immigrants settled into the life style of the "hunter and gatherer", surviving on the natural resources of fish, wild animals and berries for food and clothing, and of the woods for shelter--wood replacing the mud, stone and brick building materials of the British houses.

The early Newfoundlander was not, of course, totally cut off from his homeland, there being ships going back and forth bringing supplies of staple foods and basic technological equipment, domesticated animals, and more immigrants, and returning to Britain with the products of the fishery. Newfoundlanders were, however, by nature of their new environment and new learning experiences, developing new values and ideals subtly different from those of their counterparts in Britain. Emphasis was placed on different aspects of life and living and, as a result, when an older custom was brought back into service, it was

adapted to encompass this shift in emphasis--a process known as "reinterpretation." In order to meet the needs of a culture an item or custom, either borrowed or reinstated, might undergo alteration in "form", "function", and/or "meaning."⁴ In the case of the church bell, the form of the item remained stable for the simple reason that it was, and always has been imported to Newfoundland, this province having neither the facilities, nor the demand for manufacture. The function, however, was adapted and only those parts of the tradition which were applicable to the new context were employed. It is this basic selectivity which reflects the culture change which occurred between the Newfoundlander and his ancestors.

Goodenough points out that:

Customs, as shared habits, must be gratifying in some way to the majority of a society's members . . . if they are to persist.⁵

Thus, as we saw in the survey of ringing customs in Chapter 4, bells rung for "seed sewing", "harvest", "fox-hunting", "cock-fighting" and such like, which were not needed in the new context, or changed culture and were rejected as a part of the tradition, and disappeared from use. Others, such as the use of the bell as a directional guide, were given a new orientation, in the latter case the emphasis being placed on helping the fisherman home across the water rather

⁴For further discussion on this topic see Clyde M. Woods, Culture Change (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown, 1975).

⁵Goodenough, p. 64.

than the farmer across the land. And still other customs, such as ringing for church cleaning, boat launching and house moving, were added to the tradition, giving it its local cultural characteristics.

In any culture there exist elements of stability alongside those of change and, if we compare the ringing customs found in Britain with those adopted in Newfoundland, we find those of a most similar nature to be in the category associated with the customs of the church. The church here, with its established and accepted theologies, is an example of a cross-cultural stabilising influence. Those ringing practices associated with belief systems on the other hand--much less stable and, therefore, more susceptible to change--are found to be almost non-existent in Newfoundland. Both of the above are further examples of selectivity.

This selection process can also be seen to be in operation with church bell inscriptions, the new culture having no need for, and therefore negating, references to change ringing, the recasting of older bells to obtain smaller ones in greater numbers, and inter-foundry rivalries. What they do show is the increased interest in, and the importance of man in today's society, and the importance placed by him on community identity and aspects of life essential to survival--the fishery.

The structures in which the bells are housed in Newfoundland are also indicative of culture change. It was

pointed out earlier that there were inherent problems with the towers of the wooden churches in Newfoundland, they frequently being too weak to support a swinging bell for any great length of time. It is here that we see culturally related improvisation in the building of campaniles designed on the basis of other locally important structures; an old form designed to meet the needs of a new function.

In this manner we see the process of learning undergone by the Newfoundlander in an attempt to cope with a new environmental setting. As his values and beliefs change, in an attempt to gratify his new needs, the customs that he has either adopted or reincorporated also change. The existence of a custom--it being the means by which certain needs are met--is, in itself, a tangible expression of that need, and a change in custom is also an expression of a change in need, value or belief. Thus, as the British immigrants adapted to their new environment and developed the culture of Newfoundland, they also adapted and developed their customs.

But this is not where the story ends for we are still, today, encountering changes in this tradition. This is a result, not of the relocation of people to a new environment as was the case with the initial immigration to Newfoundland, but of the acculturative influences of North America as a whole, and of Canada in particular.

Table 18 summarises the changes in the church bell tradition between its form as it was in Britain, and that

presently found in Newfoundland, effected by the developing culture of the province and the acculturative influences of Great Britain and North America. The development of Newfoundland follows the path of a gradual reduction in her reliance on Great Britain and an increasing reliance on and association with North America. Finally, in 1949, the colony made a break from the "Mother Country" and became a province of Canada. Even prior to this, however, her development had been influenced quite considerably by that neighbouring culture. Woods, when discussing development and modernisation, explains that:

Development refers to change at the community level and modernization to change at the individual level. The former may be defined as "the process whereby a contemporary society improves its control of the environment by means of an increasingly competent technology applied by increasingly complex organizations," and the latter as "the process by which individuals change from a traditional way of life to a more complex, technologically advanced and rapidly changing way of life.⁶

Some of the more advanced technology of North America was adopted by Newfoundland, presumably because it gratified her needs, with a resultant change in her life style and modernisation on the part of the people. Many older traditions associated with this communication system began to disappear as new, and more effective methods were introduced. The reorganisation of communities into larger units led to the redundancy of some church bells, and to a decline in use of others as they became less efficient as communicators.

⁶Woods, p. 50.

TABLE 18

SCHEMATIC OUTLINE OF THE CHANGES IN THE CHURCH BELL TRADITION BETWEEN ITS FORM IN 19TH CENTURY BRITAIN AND THAT PRESENTLY EXISTING IN NEWFOUNDLAND, EFFECTED BY THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROVINCE, AND THE ACCULTURATIVE INFLUENCES OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTH AMERICA

Approximate time period	Cultural influence	Culture change	Custom change
1600-1800.	Britain.	→ Emigration to Newfoundland. ↓ Adaptation to a new environment. ↓ Establishment of new beliefs and ideals.	Non-existent.
1820.	Britain.	→ Newfoundland Culture.	→ Introduction of church bells imported from Great Britain. ↓ Attrition of ringing customs associated with early British belief system; agricultural needs; events of national importance to Great Britain; sports and pastimes from the British tradition. ↓ Reorientation of the use of the bell as a directional guide and to announce accidents and emergencies.

TABLE 18 (Continued)

Approximate time period	Cultural influence	Culture change	Custom change
1820-1850.	Britain.	Newfoundland Culture.	<p>Addition of ringing customs to meet local needs such as church cleaning, boat launching, and house moving.</p> <p>Adaptation and localisation of bell inscriptions.</p> <p>Modification of structures used to support the bell.</p>
1850-1950	North America.	Newfoundland Culture.	Newfoundland church bell tradition.
1900		<p>Increased trade and interaction with North America.</p> <p>Adoption of some of North America's technology.</p> <p>Modernisation and a desire to become part of the North American political and economic structure.</p>	Importation of American bells.

TABLE 18. (Continued)

Approximate time period	Cultural influence	Culture change	Custom change
1949-1981	Canada	<p>→ Canadian Province.</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Social, political, and economic reorganisation. Increased interaction and trade with Canada.</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Increase in industry. Larger communities. Improved communication systems. Modernisation. Desire to follow main- land trends.</p>	<p>→ Importation of Canadian bells.</p>
1960s			<p>→ Influx of electronic chime systems.</p> <p>→ Mainland carillon-style campaniles.</p> <p>→ Decline in use of the church bell, and the implementation of secondary functions.</p>

In the cities people were spread over a fairly large area in which more than one church was represented. The bell's message had to not only travel a considerable distance, but also in competition with the messages of other bells and the sounds of the modern industrial and motorised age. Electronic fire alarms and sirens and rapid communication systems such as the telephone and radio negated most of the bell's secular roles, and since travel methods had improved and church services could be held at regular times, its use to indicate the time of service became more or less redundant. A frequent side effect of industrialisation and urbanisation is noise pollution, the barrage of sound continuing relentlessly from Monday to Saturday. Sunday is looked upon as a quiet time in which to rest after the toils of the week and, sometimes, the celebrations of the weekend, and as a brief respite from industrial and traffic noise. Perhaps as an over-reaction to the noise to which they are subjected every other day, people are now complaining about the "din" of church bells which disturbs their peace on Sunday mornings. Mark Twain expressed it in the following manner:

There is no family in America without a clock and consequently there is no fair pretext for the usual Sunday medley of dreadful sound that issues from our steeples.⁷

This attitude has spread to St. John's, and in some areas of the city where chime systems have been installed in churches,

⁷Leonard Louis Levinson, ed., Bartlett's Unfamiliar Quotations (Chicago: Cowles Book Co., 1971), p. 43.

they are only used during the Christmas period as a result of complaints from the local residents. This seems to be a reaction restricted to the larger urban areas, and I have not encountered it in the outport communities of the province. But, it is interesting to note that, in the larger centres, the culture has changed to the degree that a custom which once served to gratify the society's needs, and which still continues to do so in the more rural areas, is now regarded as having a detrimental and disturbing effect. Here we have an example of sub-cultures within an overall culture which, because of the nature of their social organisation, have different needs and, therefore, different means of gratifying them. The city of St. John's with its modern outlook towards the west and south and the subsequent technological imports, its population of 100,000 or more, its industries, airport, hospitals, fire, police and ambulance services, its shopping malls, restaurants, cinemas, theatres, pubs and traffic, is a far cry from the South Coast community of La Poile with its population of approximately 300, where the mode of transport is either boat or foot with not a car to be seen in the place, where the general store provides for the whole community and also serves as the post office, and where the school functions as the overall "entertainment hall" for the people, also doubling as the church until 1978. Then, too, there is the sub-culture between these two extremes, the larger outport with road systems, supermarkets, cottage hospitals and the

like. It is the difference between these socio-economic settings within the culture of Newfoundland, with their differing aims, desires and needs which accounts for the variation we have found in the church bell tradition. Even the geographical location of the community has affected the selection of customs, as was seen earlier, the bell's function as a directional guide for fishermen not being employed in areas with a fjordal coastline.

This variation was compounded by the different rates of development in the various regions of the province, the larger centres often being the first to receive the services of electricity and being the first, therefore, in a position to install electronic chime systems. Larger centres, also, are often more cosmopolitan, with the result, perhaps, of a greater awareness of other people's beliefs, values and customs, and a greater opportunity to see what more progressive societies have to offer. A frequent outcome of modernisation is the emergence of feelings, on the part of the people in the more traditional culture, that "new is better." Often old ideas, customs and items, which in fact adequately serve their purpose, are rejected as being old and, therefore, inferior, and there is a general trend to adopt the modern idiom more for the sake of being "with it" than for the sake of necessity. This would be even more so the case in an area where a tradition was not particularly strong, and might explain the avid retention of church bells in Great Britain in the face of available

electronic chime systems, and the decline of the bell in Newfoundland where, after a break in tradition for about 200 years, it was bound to have become weakened. But, in some respects, this overall modernisation and culture change has been a little too rapid and dramatic for the Newfoundlander. In consequence, people's feelings of insecurity began to surface with the result that they reached out to items and elements of the past in an attempt to relieve their anxieties--in this case, by retaining and displaying old church bells. As these anxieties are overcome, this support is no longer required and the custom falls into disuse or, as we saw with the bell flowerpots, is simply neglected until it either disintegrates or is swallowed up by the surroundings.

The church bell tradition is just one example of how culture and culture changes are reflected in the customs and lore of the people. We have been dealing here with a material item, the change in use of which is fairly obvious to the observer. But this concept is not restricted to the church bell, for we find old boats modified for use as chicken coups, and old barrels converted for use as chairs. Neither is it restricted to material culture, for similar changes can be found in the oral tradition where, for example, a work song, once used to give a marked rhythm by which human efforts could be united and in a psychological attempt to lighten the load, might take on a function of purely entertainment value after the coming of mechanisation

and the subsequent redundancy of human help in the work process.

The state of any custom or item of folklore is dependent on the nature of its host culture, and the future status of the church bell tradition in Newfoundland depends very much on the development of the province, as its various states in the past were dictated by earlier cultural changes. It may happen that the energy shortages of this era become so critical as to force electrically powered chime systems out of service. If this be the case, and the need is felt to maintain a public communication system, bells may well be reinstated. On the other hand, they might all, eventually, be replaced by electronic systems, disappearing from the culture in both form and function after, perhaps, an intermediary period during which they perform a secondary function. Or, perhaps, the continuing acculturative influences of the mainland will result in the adoption of the carillon with its tune playing abilities, and in keeping with the style of campanile already adopted.

At present there is no way of knowing just what will become of this tradition in Newfoundland, but one thing is certain: as the process of selection and adaptation within the communication system has reflected cultural change in the past--on the one hand the cultural changes experienced by the initial settlers and on the other hand the more recent changes influenced by the increased interaction with North America--it will reflect the culture

changes resulting from the province's future development. The church bell tradition will, in other words, continue to "ring the changes."

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLANDDepartment of FolkloreChurch Bell Questionnaire (Q80A)

There is very little information available at present on the church bells in Newfoundland. Many communities have, or have had, bells which, by the nature of their inscriptions, dates and founder's marks, can add considerably to our knowledge of the history of Newfoundland. For example, in St. Peter's Anglican Church in Twillingate there is a bell with the inscription "In Memory of the Great Haul, 1862", a reminder of the unusually prosperous seal fishery in Notre Dame Bay in that year. Not all bell inscriptions are of such an historical or secular nature, some are in memory of Bishops, Ministers, Church Wardens, or Parish members, while some are dedicated to Saints or to the work of the Christian Church. Some bells are marked with only the name of the founder, and the date they were made, while others have no markings whatsoever. All, however, are important in piecing together the tradition of church bells in Newfoundland.

I have taken this subject as the topic of my thesis, and am looking for information on the whereabouts of the bells in Newfoundland, how they came to be there, and when and how they are used. I would greatly appreciate your help by completing the attached questionnaire. This may be a

little time consuming, but will be of great value in my work.

Thank you in advance for your co-operation.

Completed questionnaires may be sent to the Department of Folklore, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland, A1C 5S7. All information will be permanently filed in the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive.

Please answer every question as fully as you can, giving details whenever possible. If you need more space, or wish to add further comments, please use separate sheets of paper.

PLEASE NOTE

If you do not now live in the community in which you grew up, and there is a bell tradition in your childhood community, I would greatly appreciate your taking the time to fill in another questionnaire on that community also, or, if you prefer, including this information on separate sheets of paper.

YOUR NAME:

BIRTH DATE:

HOME COMMUNITY:

PRESENT ADDRESS:

RELIGION:

TODAY'S DATE:

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. List each church, and its denomination, found in your community and specify whether it has a) a bell, b) an electronic chime system, c) a record/tape system, d) no sound-making equipment.
2. For each church that has a bell, please specify whether it is:
 - a) in a tower attached to the church
 - b) in a tower separated from the church
 - c) on a stand outside the church
 - d) inside the church, please give location
 - e) lying in the church grounds
3. If the bell is on an outside stand, what is the name given to this?
4. Please supply as much of the following information as possible for each bell, specifying which bell you are discussing.
 - a) the date the bell was placed in the church
 - b) the name of the company that made the bell
 - c) the name of the individual or group who paid for the bell
 - d) the cost of the bell and installation
 - e) the weight/size/note/pitch
 - f) the inscription on the bell
5. Was the bell 'blessed' or specially dedicated when installed? If yes, when, and by whom?

6. For each bell in the community rung on a regular weekly basis, please specify on what days it is rung, and at what time of the day.

7. Why is the bell rung at these times?

8. Is the bell rung on any of the following occasions:

Birth:

Christening:

Wedding:

Death:

Funeral:

For each occasion, please indicate how long the bell is rung, by whom, and the reason for ringing it at this time.

9. Is the bell rung on any of the following special days?

Christmas Eve:

Christmas Day:

New Year's Eve:

New Year's Day:

Twelfth Night:

Candlemas:

Shrove Tuesday:

Lent:

St. Patrick's Day:

Palm Sunday:

Holy Week:

Good Friday:

Easter Saturday:

Easter Sunday

Easter Monday:

Whitsunday:

May-Day:

Thanksgiving:

Hallowe'en:

Remembrance Day (November 11th):

For each occasion, please indicate how long the bell is rung, by whom, and the reason for ringing it at this time.

10. Is the bell rung on any of the following occasions? Please ✓. a) fire. b) mine disaster. c) accident in the community. d) for men lost on the ice. e) for men lost in the woods. f) shipwreck. g) arrival of important visitors, e.g., Bishop or Premier. h) Coronation. i) end of either of the World Wars, please specify which _____. j) election of a Pope. k) election of a Bishop. l) confirmations. m) graduation. n) any other occasion, please specify _____.

11. If the bell rang at any other time than those you have stated above, what would it mean to you?

12. If there is a bell in your church which is not rung, why is this?

13. If your church changed from a real bell to electronic chimes, or a record/tape P.A. system, please give details of:

- a) when and why this happened.
- b) from where the machine was bought.
- c) the cost.
- d) the name of the person or group who paid for it.
- e) when it is used.
- f) what became of the old bell.
- g) your feelings about an electronic system vs. a bell.

14. If, in your community, there are bells in places other than the church, e.g., in someone's back yard, or discarded on church property, please give details of location and how it came to be there.

15. Do you see church bells as: (please ☒ all that are appropriate).

- a) unnecessary noise makers. ☐
- b) a sacred item to be treated with all due respect. ☐
- c) an important means of communication. ☐
- d) an important part of the religious life of your community. ☐
- e) an important part of the everyday life of your community. ☐
- f) other, please specify. ☐

16. Are there any rocks/shoals/bays/coves/streets, etc., in your area with any of the following names?

Bell:

Belfry:

Bell-Rope:

Clapper(s):

Tongue:

Chime:

Ring:

Any other bell-related name:

If the answer to any of the above is yes, please give details of the location, and why the place is given this name.

17. Are there any sunken bells in your area? If yes, please give location, and explain how they came to be there.

18. Is there any history of a bell ringing by itself in your area? If yes, please give details.

19. Are there any particular stories associated with bells in your area? If yes, please give details.

20. Why do you think a bell is referred to as a 'she'?

21. As a child did you sing any songs/nursery rhymes about bells? If yes, please give the words, details of when and why it would be sung, and any actions performed with it.
22. As an adult do you sing, or know anyone in your community who sings songs about bells? If yes, please give the title of the song, the words, and the name of the singer.
23. Do you have a bell in your house, or know of anyone else in the community who has a bell in their house, which is used for any specific reason, e.g., protection from thunderstorms? If yes, please give details.
24. If your community has no bell, or electronic chime/P.A. system, is any other form of call to worship used, e.g., flags, gunshots? If yes, please give details.

APPENDIX B

BELLS PERSONALLY LOCATED IN ST. JOHN'S

Date	Location	No.	Pertinent Information
23/1/80	Corpus Christi R.C.	2 **	Bell in outside tower is a train bell.
31/1/80	St. David's Pres.	1	Relocated from Old Perlican U.C.
3/2/80	Woodstock, Colonial Inn.	1 *	Old bell from St. Mary the Virgin Ang.
20/2/80	St. Thomas' Ang.	1	Bell, chimes and electronic system.
22/2/80	St. Joseph's R.C.	1	
13/3/80	Basilica of St. John The Baptist, R.C.	9 ****	
14/3/80	St. Mary the Virgin, Ang.	1 *	Bell made for use as the "town" fire bell, lying behind church.
14/3/80	St. Andrew's Pres.	1	
14/3/80	St. Patrick's R.C.	1	
14/3/80	Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, Ang.	1	
12/7/80	162, Logy Bay Rd., Dr. Harpur's garden.	1 *	Relocated from Ship Island Cove U.C., Notre Dame Bay.

R.C. = Roman Catholic; Ang. = Anglican; Pres. = Presbyterian; U.C. = United Church of Canada; * = Bells not in ringable condition.

APPENDIX C

BELLS PERSONALLY LOCATED ON SOUTH COAST FIELD TRIP

Date	Community	Location	No.
12/8/80	Swift Current	Bethany U.C.	1 * displayed
12/8/80	Terrenceville	R.C.	1 *
14/8/80	La Poile	U.C.	1 *
15/8/80	Grand Bruit	Ang.	1
15/8/80	Ramea	St. Boniface Ang.	1
16/8/80	Ramea	Basement of St. Patrick's R.C. Church Hall.	1 * inscribed 'St. Ronan's, 1882'
16/8/80	Burgeo	Faith U.C.	1
16/8/80	Burgeo	St. John the Evangelist Ang.	1
17/8/80	Grey River	Ang.	1
18/8/80	Francois	Sts. Simon and Jude, Ang.	1
19/8/80	McCallum	Ang.	1
20/8/80	Great Jarvis	Lying in a field in this resettled community.	1 *
21/8/80	Gaultois	St. Luke's Ang.	1
21/8/80	Gaultois	Stored in the warehouse of Mr. Thomas Garland.	1 *

* = Bells not in ringable condition.

APPENDIX D
BELLS PERSONALLY LOCATED IN THE HERMITAGE/HARBOUR BRETON AREA

Date	Community	Location	No.
25/8/80	Pool's Cove	U.C.	2 * old bell used as a flower pot in the church yard.
25/8/80	St. Jacques	R.C.	1
25/8/80	St. Jacques	Ang.	1
26/8/80	Belleoram	St. Lawrence Ang.	1
26/8/80	English Harbour West	St. Thomas' Ang.	1
26/8/80	Mose Ambrose	St. Paul's Ang.	1
26/8/80	Boxey Harbour	St. John the Evangelist Ang.	2 *
26/8/80	Coomb's Cove	Holy Trinity Ang.	1
27/8/80	Harbour Breton	St. Bartholomew's Ang.	1
27/8/80	Harbour Breton	In garden of the Priest's house	2 ** used as flower pots.
27/8/80	Harbour Breton	In garden of Sunny Cottage	1 *
27/8/80	Harbour Breton	In Tom Jenson's front yard	2 displayed on stands.
27/8/80	Hermitage	St. Saviour's Ang.	2
27/8/80	Hermitage	On beach behind André Rubinish's house	1 *

APPENDIX D (Continued)

Date	Community	Location	No.
28/8/80	St. Alban's	St. Ignatius' R.C.	2 ** one used as a flower pot in front of the church, the other lying behind the church.
28/8/80	Morrisville	Ang. Church of The Ascension.	1
28/8/80	Head Bay D'Espoir	Christ Church Ang.	1 * stored in shed beside church.
29/8/80	Conne River	St. Ann's R.C.	1

* = Bells not in ringable condition.

APPENDIX E

BELLS PERSONALLY LOCATED ON FOGO ISLAND

Date	Community	Location	No.
3/3/80	Joe Batt's Arm	Ang.	1
3/3/80	Fogo	Ang.	1
3/3/80	Fogo	U.C.	1
31/8/80	Tilting	St. Patrick's R.C.	1
31/8/80	Joe Batt's Arm	Mary Queen of the World, R.C.	1
31/8/80	Stag Harbour	U.C.	1
31/8/80	Island Harbour	St. Paul's Ang.	1
31/8/80	Deep Bay	Good Shepherd Ang.	1
31/8/80	Seldom-Come-By.	U.C.	1 *
31/8/80	Seldom-Come-By	Ang.	1

* = Bells not in ringable condition.

APPENDIX F

BELLS PERSONALLY LOCATED ON THE PORT AU PORT PENINSULA

Date	Community	Located	No.
11/6/80	Port au Port East	Maria Regina R.C.	1 *
11/6/80	Bosworlos	U.C.	2 * one in the garden of the house next to the old church site, used as a flower pot.
11/6/80	Campbell's Creek	R.C.	1 * lying in priest's vestry.
11/6/80	Petit Jardin	R.C.	1 *
11/6/80	Lourdes	Our Lady of Lourdes, R.C.	1 * displayed outside church.

* = Bells not in ringable condition.

APPENDIX G
BELLS PERSONALLY LOCATED ON THE NORTHERN PENINSULA

Date	Community	Location	No.
17/5/80	St. Anthony	U.C.	1
17/5/80	St. Anthony	St. Mary's Ang.	1 *
18/5/80	Ship Cove	Denomination not known	1 *
18/5/80	Raleigh	Denomination not known	1 *
19/5/80	Plum Point	Denomination not known	1
19/5/80	Port au Choix	Denomination not known	1
20/5/80	Daniel's Harbour	Holy Cross Ang.	1
20/5/80	Cow Head	Denomination not known	1
20/5/80	Sally's Cove	Denomination not known	1 *
24/8/80	Rocky Harbour	St. Mathew's Ang.	1
24/8/80	Rocky Harbour	U.C.	1 * train bell

* = Bells not in ringable condition.

APPENDIX H

BELLS PERSONALLY LOCATED IN THE CONCEPTION BAY AREA

Date	Community	Location	No.
2/7/80	Caplin Cove	Ang.	1
2/7/80	Caplin Cove	R.C.	1
2/7/80	Victoria, C.B.	U.C.	1 * displayed
2/7/80	Job's Cove	Denomination not known	1
2/7/80	Sibley's Cove	U.C.	1

* = Bells not in ringable condition.

APPENDIX

BELLS PERSONALLY LOCATED ON THE GANDER TO GAMBO LOOP ROAD

Date	Community	Location	No.
30/8/80	George's Point	Ang.	1
30/8/80	Clarke's Head	Christ Church Ang.	1
30/8/80	Frederickton	U.C.	2 * one lying in graveyard.
30/8/80	Noggin Cove	U.C.	1
30/8/80	Noggin Cove	Garden	1 *
30/8/80	Carmanville	U.C.	1
3/1/81	Davidsville	Ang.	1 train bell
3/1/81	Aspen Cove	U.C.	1
3/1/81	Ladle Cove	U.C.	1
3/1/81	Pound Cove	U.C.	1
3/1/81	Pound Cove	Ang.	1
3/1/81	Newtown	St. Luke's Ang.	1
3/1/81	Valleyfield	U.C.	1
3/1/81	Brookfield	U.C.	1
3/1/81	Wesleyville	Jubilee U.C.	2 * old, cracked bell lying in church grounds
3/1/81	Indian Bay	Ang.	1
3/1/81	Trinity, B.B.	Ang.	1

* = Bells not in ringable condition.

APPENDIX J

BELLS PERSONALLY LOCATED ON RANDOM ISLAND AND IN MUSGRAVETOWN AREA

Date	Community	Location	No.
29/12/80	Port Blandford	St. Aidan's Ang.	1
29/12/80	Port Blandford	U.C.	1 *
29/12/80	Bunyan's Cove	U.C.	1
29/12/80	Bunyan's Cove	Ang.	1
29/12/80	Musgravetown	U.C.	1
30/12/80	Clareville	Memorial U.C.	1 * displayed.
30/12/80	Elliot's Cove, Random Island	U.C.	1
30/12/80	Weybridge, Random Island	U.C.	1 * underneath church.
30/12/80	Lady Cove, Random Island	Ang.	1
30/12/80	Hickman's Harbour Random Island	U.C.	1* stored in Minister's basement.
30/12/80	Petley, Random Island	All Saint's Ang.	1
30/12/80	Britannia, Random Island	U.C.	1

* = Bells not in ringable condition.

APPENDIX K

BELLS PERSONALLY LOCATED ON THE BONAVISTA PENINSULA

Date	Community	Location	No.
12/5/81	Trinity, T.B.	St. Paul's Ang.	1
12/5/81	Trinity, T.B.	R.C.	1
12/5/81	Old Bonaventure	St. Luke's Ang.	1
12/5/81	Trouty	St. Mathew's Ang.	1
12/5/81	Dunfield	U.C.	1
12/5/81	Champney's	St. Nicholas' Ang.	1
12/5/81	English Harbour, T.B.	U.C.	1
12/5/81	English Harbour, T.B.	All Saint's Ang.	1
12/5/81	Port Union	Church of the Holy Martyrs, Ang.	1
12/5/81	Port Union	R.C.	1
12/5/81	Catalina	St. Peter's Ang.	1
13/5/81	Bonavista	R.C.	1
13/5/81	Bonavista	U.C.	1
13/5/81	Bonavista	Christ Church Ang.	1 * lying in the grounds of the new church, awaiting the construction of a tower.
13/5/81	Newman's Cove	Ang.	1
13/5/81	Newman's Cove	U.C.	2 * one used as a flower pot in front of the church.

APPENDIX K (Continued)

Date	Community	Location	No.
13/5/81	Amherst Cove	St. Nicholas' Ang.	1
13/5/81	King's Cove	St. James' Ang.	1
13/5/81	King's Cove	Sts. Peter & Paul R.C.	2 * cracked bell lying by front steps of church.
13/5/81	Keels	St. Phillip's Ang.	1
13/5/81	Plate Cove East	R.C.	1
13/5/81	Summerville	R.C.	1
13/5/81	Summerville	U.C.	1 * fire-cracked bell displayed in church grounds.
13/5/81	Princeton	St. Peter's Ang.	1

* = Bells not in ringable condition.

APPENDIX L

BELLS PERSONALLY LOCATED ON BELL ISLAND AND IN THE ENVIRONS OF ST. JOHN'S

Date	Community	Location	No.
15/7/80	Torbay	Holy Trinity R.C.	1
15/7/80	Pouch Cove	All Saint's Ang.	1 * as of Sept. 1980, awaiting new tower.
15/7/80	Pouch Cove	Memorial U.C.	1 * displayed on church grounds.
15/7/80	Bauline	U.C.	1 * displayed in graveyard - train bell.
21/7/80	Wabana, Bell Is.	St. Michael's R.C.	1 *
21/7/80	Wabana, Bell Is.	St. Cyprian's Ang.	1
21/7/80	Lance Cove, Bell Is.	St. Mary the Virgin, Ang.	1
20/2/81	Petty Harbour	R.C.	1 Canadian National ship's bell.
20/2/81	Petty Harbour	St. George's Ang.	1
7/6/81	Portugal Cove	Holy Rosary R.C.	1

* - Bells not in ringable condition.

APPENDIX M

COMPLETE LISTING OF ANGLICAN BELLS LOCATED TO DATE, SHOWING
BREAK DOWN OF SOURCES

Community	P	Q	M	W	O
1 Amherst Cove, B.B.	*				
2 Badger's Quay			*		
3 Barachois Brook				*	
4 Bay Bulls				*	
5 Bay L'Argent				*	
6 Bellburns			*		
7 Belleoram	*				
8 Boat Harbour				*	
9 Bonavista	*				
10 Boxey Harbour	*				
11 Boxey Harbour	*				
12 Brigus			*		
13 Brooklyn		*			
14 Brookside				*	
15 Buchans		*			
16 Bunyan's Cove	*				
17 Burgeo	*				
18 Burin		*			
19 Cannings Cove		*			
20 Caplin Cove	*				
21 Carbonear				*	
22 Cartwright, Lab.		*			
23 Catalina	*				
24 Champneys	*				
25 Change Islands		*			
26 Change Islands		*			
27 Charleston		*			
28 Clarke's Head	*				
29 Cooks Harbour				*	
30 Coombs Cove	*				
31 Corner Brook		*			
32 Daniel's Harbour	*				
33 Davidsville	*				
34 Deep Bay, Fogo Is.	*				
35 Dildo		*			
36 Dover				*	
37 Elliston, T.B.			*		
38 English Harbour, T.B.	*				
39 English Harbour West	*				
40 Flower's Cove			*		
41 Fogo	*				
42 Fortune		*			
43 Foxroost/Margaree				*	
44 Francois	*				

APPENDIX M (Continued)

Community	P	Q	M	W	O
45 Gaultois	*				
46 George's Point	*				
47 Glenwood					P*
48 Grand Bank			*		
49 Grand Bruit	*				
50 Grand le Pierre				*	
51 Greenspond		*			
52 Grey River	*				
53 Harbour Breton	*				
54 Harbour Deep		*			
55 Harbour Grace				*	
56 Head Bay D'Espoir	*				
57 Heart's Content				*	
58 Hermitage	*				
59 Hermitage	*				
60 Herring Neck		*			
61 Hillview				*	
62 Indian Bay, B.B.	*				
63 Island Harbour, Fogo Is.	*				
64 Jacques Fontaine				*	
65 Jamestown, B.B.		*			
66 Joe Batt's Arm, Fogo Is.	*				
67 Keels, B.B.	*				
68 King's Cove	*				
69 Lady Cove, Random Is.	*				
70 Lance Cove, Bell Is.	*				
71 Lethbridge		*			
72 Lewisporte		*			
73 Little Harbour East, P.B.				*	
74 Morrisville	*				
75 Mose Ambrose	*				
76 McCallum	*				
77 New Harbour		*			
78 Newman's Cove	*				
79 Norman's Cove				*	
80 Newtown	*				
81 Old Bonaventure	*				
82 Petley, Random Is.	*				
83 Petty Harbour	*				
84 Pike's Arm				*	
85 Placentia				*	
86 Pool's Island				*	
87 Port-aux-Basques		*			
88 Port Blandford	*				
89 Port de Grave		*			
90 Port Union	*				
91 Portugal Cove		*			
92 Pouch Cove	*				

APPENDIX M (Continued)

Community	P	Q	M	W	O
93 Pound Cove	*				
94 Princeton	*				
95 Ramea	*				
96 Rocky Harbour	*				
97 St. Anthony	*				
98 St. Jacques	*				
99 St. John's	*				
100 St. John's	*				
101 St. John's	*				
102 St. Lawrence		*			
103 St. Phillips		*			
104 Salvage			*		
105 Seldom-Come-By	*				
106 Shearstown			*		
107 South River				*	
108 Springdale				*	
109 Stephenville				*	
110 Terrenceville		*			
111 Trinity, B.B.	*				
112 Trinity, T.B.	*				
113 Trouty	*				
114 Twillingate				*	
115 Upper Gullies		*			
116 Upper Island Cove		*			
117 Wabana, Bell Is.	*				
118 Wareham			*		
119 Wiltondale					*
120 Windsor		*			
121 Winterbrook		*			
122 Winterton		*			
	59	29	9	23	2

P = bells located personally.

Q = bells located from questionnaire returns.

M = bells located from MUNFLA manuscripts.

W = bells located from written records such as Newfoundland Churchman, church histories, and letters received from bell foundries.

O = bells located from verbal sources.

APPENDIX N

COMPLETE LISTING OF ROMAN CATHOLIC BELLS LOCATED TO
DATE, SHOWING BREAK DOWN OF SOURCES

Community	P	Q	M	W	O
1 Bay of Islands area				*	
2 Bonavista	*				
3 Boyd's Cove		*			
4 Brent's Cove		*			
5 Buchans		*			
6 Burin		*			
7 Campbell's Creek	*				
8 Cape Broyle			*		
9 Caplin Cove	*				
10 Carbonear		*			
11 Conne River	*				
12 Corbin		*			
13 Corner Brook			*		
14 Fogo				*	
15 Harbour Breton	*				
16 Harbour Breton	*				
17 Harbour Grace		*			
18 Joe Batt's Arm, Fogo Is.	*				
19 King's Cove	*				
20 King's Cove	*				
21 Lourdes	*				
22 North River		*			
23 Petit Jardin	*				
24 Petty Harbour	*				
25 Plate Cove East	*				
26 Port au Port East	*				
27 Port Union	*				
28 Portugal Cove	*				
29 Ramea	*				
30 Renews			*		
31 Sagona Island					*
32 St. Albans	*				
33 St. Albans	*				
34 St. Jacques	*				
35 St. John's, Basilica	*				
36 St. John's, Basilica	*				
37 St. John's, Basilica	*				
38 St. John's, Basilica	*				
39 St. John's, Basilica	*				
40 St. John's, Basilica	*				
41 St. John's, Basilica	*				

APPENDIX N (Continued)

Community		P	Q	M	W	O
42	St. John's, Basilica	*				
43	St. John's, Basilica	*				
44	St. John's, Corpus Christi	*				
45	St. John's, Corpus Christi	*				
46	St. John's, St. Joseph's	*				
47	St. John's, St. Patrick's	*				
48	St. Lawrence			*		
49	Searston			*		
50	Southern Harbour		*			
51	Southern Harbour		*			
52	Summerville	*				
53	Terrenceville	*				
54	Tilting, Fogo Is.	*				
55	Torbay	*				
56	Tor's Cove					*
57	Trinity, T.B.	*				
58	Wabana, Bell Island	*				
59	Witless Bay		*			
		39	11	5	2	2

P = bells located personally.

Q = bells located from questionnaire returns.

M = bells located from MUNELA manuscripts.

W = bells located from written records such as The Monitor, church histories, and letters received from bell foundries.

O = bells located from verbal sources.

APPENDIX O

COMPLETE LISTING OF UNITED CHURCH BELLS LOCATED TO DATE,
SHOWING BREAK DOWN OF SOURCES

Community	P	Q	M	W	O
1 Aspen Cove	*				
2 Baie Verte				*	
3 Bauline	*				
4 Black Head		*			
5 Bonavista	*				
6 Bosworlos	*				
7 Brigus		*			
8 Britannia, Random Is.	*				
9 Broad Cove		*			
10 Brookfield	*				
11 Bunyan's Cove	*				
12 Burgeo	*				
13 Burin		*			
14 Burnt Point				*	
15 Carbonear South		*			
16 Carmanville	*				
17 Change Islands		*			
18 Charleston		*			
19 Charlottetown		*			
20 Clarenville	*				
21 Cobb's Arm		*			
22 Cupids		*			
23 Dark Cove		*			
24 Dunfield	*				
25 Elliot's Cove, Random Is.	*				
26 Elliston			*		
27 English Harbour, T.B.	*				
28 Fogo	*				
29 Fortune		*			
30 Frederickton	*				
31 Frederickton	*				
32 Freshwater			*		
33 Glovertown South					*
34 Grand Bank			*		
35 Grates Cove			*		
36 Green's Harbour		*			
37 Greenspond		*			
38 Hickman's Harbour	*				
39 Hillgrade		*			
40 La Poile	*				
41 Ladle Cove	*				
42 Lethbridge		*			
43 Little Catalina			*		
44 Little Harbour		*			

APPENDIX O (Continued)

Community	P	Q	M	W	O
45 Lower Island Cove		*			
46 Lumsden				*	
47 Musgravetown	*				
48 New Chelsea			*		
49 Newman's Cove	*				
50 Newman's Cove	*				
51 Nipper's Harbour			*		
52 Noggin Cove	*				
53 Perry's Cove		*			
54 Petites				*	
55 Pool's Cove	*				
56 Pool's Cove	*				
57 Port Blandford	*				
58 Portland		*			
59 Pouch Cove	*				
60 Pound Cove	*				
61 Rocky Harbour	*				
62 St. Anthony	*				
63 Salmon Cove		*			
64 Seldom-Come-By	*				
65 Shoal Brook			*		
66 Sibley's Cove	*				
67 Springdale		*			
68 Springdale		*			
69 Stag Harbour	*				
70 Summerford		*			
71 Summerford		*			
72 Summerville	*				
73 Swift Current	*				
74 Terra Nova		*			
75 Tizzard's Harbour				*	
76 Twillingate		*			
77 Valleyfield	*				
78 Victoria	*				
79 Wesleyville	*				
80 Wesleyville	*				
81 Weybridge, Random Is.	*				
82 Williamsport			*		
83 Winterton		*			
84 Woody Point				*	
	40	28	9	6	1

P = bells located personally.

Q = bells located from questionnaire returns.

M = bells located from MUNFLA manuscripts.

W = bells located from written records such as The Clerical Caller, church histories, and letters from bell foundries.

O = bells located from verbal sources.

APPENDIX P

COMPLETE LISTING OF DENOMINATIONALLY UNIDENTIFIED
BELLS, SHOWING BREAK DOWN OF SOURCES

Community	P	Q	M	W	O
1 Bay Roberts		*			
2 Birchy Cove			*		
3 Brooklyn				*	
4 Brunette				*	
5 Bryant's Cove					*
6 Burin				*	
7 Cottrels Cove				*	
8 Cow Head	*				
9 Curling				*	
10 Great Jarvis (resettled)	*				
11 Greenspond				*	
12 Jackson's Cove				*	
13 Job's Cove	*				
14 La Scie				*	
15 Lawn			*		
16 Leading Tickles			*		
17 Little Bay					*
18 Main Brook				*	
19 Moreton's Harbour				*	
20 Musgrave Harbour				*	
21 Norris Point				*	
22 Plum Point	*				
23 Port aux Choix	*				
24 Raleigh	*				
25 Sally's Cove	*				
26 Ship's Cove	*				
27 Southport				*	
	8	1	3	13	2

P = bells personally located.

Q = bells located from questionnaire returns.

M = bells located from MUNFLA manuscripts.

W = bells located from written sources such as letters
received from bell foundries.

O = bells located from verbal sources.

APPENDIX Q

COMPLETE LISTING OF BELLS LOCATED TO DATE, WHICH ARE
NOT ON CHURCH PROPERTY

Community	Location
1 Bosworlos	Used as a flower pot in the garden of the house next to the old church site.
2 Gaultois	Lying in Roy Ingram's warehouse.
3 Harbour Breton	Lying in back garden of Mr. Stewart's house, Sunny Cottage.
4 Harbour Breton	Mounted in Tom Jenson's front yard.
5 Harbour Breton	Mounted in Tom Jenson's front yard.
6 Hermitage	Lying on beach behind André Rubinich's house.
7 Herring Neck	Somewhere in the community.
8 Noggin Cove	Front garden.
9 St. John's	Displayed outside Woodstock, Colonial Inn.
10 St. John's	Mounted in Dr. Harpur's garden, 162, Logy Bay Road.
11 Victoria	In Mr. Selpy Manual's yard.
12 Western Bay	In front garden.

APPENDIX R

BELLS FROM THE MENEELY BELL CO., TROY, NEW YORK, LOCATED
IN NEWFOUNDLAND

	Location	Date
1	St. John's, lying behind St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church.	1878
2	Petley, Random Island.	1901
3	Summerville, R.C.	1901
4	Keels, B.B., St. Phillip's Ang.	1906
5	Newman's Cove, B.B., Anglican.	1936
6	St. John's, St. Joseph's R.C.	1908
7	St. John's, St. Patrick's R.C.	1912
8	North River All Hallow's R.C.	1913
9	Torbay Holy Trinity R.C.	1915
10	Tilting, Fogo Island, St. Patrick's R.C.	1919
11	Port Blandford, St. Aidan's Ang.	1924
12	Perry's Cove, U.C.	1926
13	Hickman's Harbour, Random Island, U.C.	1930
14	Boxey Harbour, Ang., St. John the Evangelist	1936
15	Boxey Harbour St. John the Evangelist, this bell was originally in Jersey Harbour.	Unknown

APPENDIX S

BELLS FROM MENEELY & CO., WEST TROY, NEW YORK,
LOCATED IN NEWFOUNDLAND

	Location	Date
1	English Harbour, T.B., All Saints Ang.	1885
2	Pouch Cove, All Saint's Ang.	1890
3	Hermitage, St. Saviour's Ang.	1903
4	Trouty, St. Mathew's Ang.	1906
5	Burgeo St. John the Evangelist Ang.	1907
6	Portugal Cove, St. Lawrence Ang.	1908
7	English Harbour West St. Thomas Ang.	1910
8	New Harbour, T.B., St. Augustine's Ang.	1911
9	Windsor, St. Alban's Ang., bought originally for Holy Trinity in Grand Falls	1913
10	Lance Cove, Bell Island; St. Mary the Virgin Ang.	1917
11	Francois St. Simon & St. Jude Ang.	1925
12	Joe Batt's Arm, Fogo Island, Ang.	1928
13	Corner Brook St. John the Evangelist Ang.	1935
14	McCallum, Ang.	Unknown
15	Harbour Breton St. Bartholemew's Ang.	Unknown

APPENDIX S (Continued)

	Location	Date
16	Head Bay D'Espoir Christ Church Ang.	Unknown
17	Old Bonaventure St. Luke's Ang.	Unknown
18	Port au Port East, Maria Regina R.C., bought originally for Our Lady of Mercy R.C. in Port au Port West	? 1893
19	Bay of Islands area, R.C.	Unknown
20	(St. Brendan's, R.C. melted in fire 22 February 1981.)	Unknown

APPENDIX T
RELOCATED BELLS

	Present Location	Original Location	Date of Move		Denomination
1 *	Boxey Harbour, St. John the Evangelist	Jersey Harbour	1971 approx.	#	Ang.
2	Bunyan's Cove	Ivanhoe, T.B.	1964/65	#	Ang.
3	Hermitage, St. Saviour's	Pass Island, St. Mathew's	1980 ?	#	Ang.
4	McCallum	Cape La Hume	1964	#	Ang.
5	Pound Cove	Pinchard's Island	1930's	#	Ang.
6	Fortune, All Saint's Ang.	Pushthrough	1968	#	Ang.
7	Lewisporte, St. Paul's	Indian Islands	1960's	#	Ang.
8	Windsor, St. Alban's	Grand Falls, Holy Trinity	1962		Ang.
9	Harbour Deep	Torbay, St. Nicholas'			Ang.
10	Bay Bulls	Goulds	1970		Ang.
11	Dover	Ireland's Eye St. George's	1965	#	Ang.
12	Little Harbour East	Harbour Buffet	1968	#	Ang.
13	Wiltondale	Head Bay D'spoir	1978		Ang.
14	St. John's, St. David's	Old Perlican U.C.	1962		Pres.

APPENDIX T (Continued)

	Present Location	Original Location	Date of Move		Denomination
15	Valleyfield Memorial U.C.	Safe Harbour	1955 approx.	#	U.C.
16	Makkovik	Hebron	1959	#	Moravian
17 *	Ramea St. Patrick's	? St. Ronan's	?		R.C.
18	St. Jacques	Bay D'Nord	1969	#	R.C.
19	Summerville	Indian Arm	?	#	R.C.
20 *	Terrenceville	St. Jacques	1969	#	R.C.
21	Brent's Cove	Argentia Naval Station	1969	\	R.C.
22	Corbin	Beau Bois		#	R.C.
23 *	Southern Harbour	Red Island	1960's	#	R.C.
24	Southern Harbour	? Placentia Bay	1960's	#	R.C.
25	Boyd's Cove	Tilting, Fogo Island	?		R.C.
26 *	St. John's Woodstock, Colonial Inn	St. John's St. Mary the Virgin	1968 approx.		Ang.
27 *	St. John's 162, Logy Bay Rd.	? Ship Island	?	#	U.C.
28 *	Harbour Breton, Sunny Cottage	Grolle	?	#	Ang.

APPENDIX T (Continued)

	Present Location	Original Location	Date of Move		Denomination
29	* Gaultois, Roy Ingram's Ware- house	Piccare	1970	#	?
30	Harbour Breton, Tom Jenson's Yard	Miller's Passage	?	#	R.C.
31	Harbour Breton, Tom Jenson's Yard	Sagona Island	1972	#	?
32	* Hermitage, On beach behind André Rubinich's house	Stone Valley (Little Bay)	?	#	?
33	Noggin Cove, garden	Frederickton	1972 approx.		U.C.
34	* Bosworlos, garden next to original church site	Bosworlos	?		U.C.
35	Somewhere in com- munity of Herring Neck	Herring Neck	?		U.C.
36	* Victoria, C.B. Mr. Selby Manual's garden	Flat Island; N.D.B.	?	#	?
37	Springdale	Millertown Junction	1978	#	Ang.
38	Western Bay	?	?		?

*denotes bells not in ringable condition.

#denotes bells moved as a direct result of the Government Resettlement programme.

